

The Commonwealth flight from Auckland, New Zealand, will take place on Nov. 17 to take the Queen to the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. The Queen will travel with a team of engineers who will transfer the Boeing 747-400 jumbo jet's first-class sectioning, luxurious cabin fit for the Queen. Normally the Queen flies in a royal squadron of chartered aircraft or charters a long-range jet. But she has accepted a recommendation by the New Zealand government to travel on a scheduled flight. A team of engineers will transfer the Boeing 747-400 jumbo jet's first-class sectioning, luxurious cabin fit for the Queen. During the approximately seven-hour turnaround at London's Heathrow Airport, the engineers will transform the first-class cabin into a command center. The first-class seats will be replaced with an elegant table and armchairs at two ends. The Duke of Edinburgh will not be on the flight and will arrive in New Zealand ahead of the Queen from South Africa where he will attend the wedding of Prince Charles' son Prince William and Kate Middleton on Nov. 20.

### Escaped Gaza prisoner turns himself in

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A Hamas hardliner gave himself up on Monday a day after escaping from a Gaza jail along with two other prisoners, Palestinian police said. "Imad Aqel turned himself in at dawn in Gaza City," police said. A member of Fatah Al Qassam, armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, Mr. Aqel was arrested two months ago in possession of arms and a bomb close to the Israeli settlement of Netzarim in the self-ruled Gaza Strip. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison by a Palestinian court, General Muhsin Arafat, head of the Palestinian military intelligence said. But Hamas said he had not been tried. Police are still searching for Osama Abu Taha and Yousef Maliki who escaped with Mr. Aqel on Sunday after sawing through the bars on their cell window. Five police guards were Monday being questioned.

### China gives 12-year-old buddha gets luxury car

BEIJING (AP) — The Chinese government will spend \$10 million to control the movement of Tibet, but never a luxury car to the 12-year-old who too young to drive. Charmed by the young Chinese, the 12-year-old is shown to the world's media. Reviewers say the young boy is a gleaming example of the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the founding of the autonomous region of Tibet. The gift was intended to be a present to the young boy and the world's media, and the boy received his gift and he was smiling. He and he was the first person in China to receive such a car from the government. Reviewers did not say whether the car would be a good investment for a young boy's future.

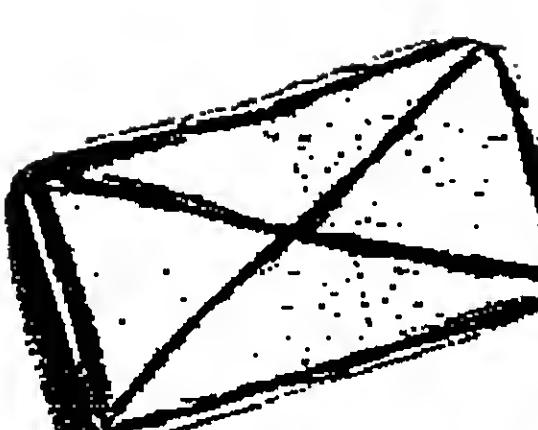
### Ato sets terms for talks with rival

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Somalia faction leader Osman Hassan Ali Ato has demanded that rival Mohammad Farah Aideed first withdraw his militia forces from the southwestern town of Baidoa he seized recently before any factional meeting between the two can be held. In an apparent answer to recent efforts by clan elders, Mr. Ato also demanded that General Aideed renounce claims of being president of Somalia, dismantle his militia forces, he calls the national army and support a national reconciliation conference. The new clan-brokered peace effort was launched by clan elders from the Saad Habr Gedir clan, to which the two men belong, headed by Mohammad Abdullahi Aduw, a former cabinet minister in the ousted regime of the late Somali president, Mohammad Siad Barre. Mr. Ato, Gen. Aideed's former financier-turned bitter enemy, heads rival wing in Gen. Aideed's United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA).

### 'Sudan harbouring over 500 militants'

CAIRO (AFP) — The Sudanese opposition in Cairo said Monday it had documents proving more than 500 Muslim militants, most of them Egyptian, were living in Sudan. The documents "specify the residences of more than 500 extremist elements and follow their movements," the spokesman of the Unionist Democratic Party in Cairo, Mohammad Mutassim, told AFP. Mr. Mutassim said the documents consisted mainly of "cassette tapes and letters." The opposition has also counted 38 homes in Khartoum and its sister city Omdurman where members of fundamentalist groups live, most of the Egyptians coming from Afghanistan. The groups also included Palestinians from the Islamic resistance movement Hamas and "certain Moroccan and Algerian fundamentalists," he said, adding, "all of them hold Sudanese passports and have received Sudanese nationality." Mr. Mutassim accused the National Islamic Front, the party of Khartoum's spiritual leader Hassan Turabi, Sudan aid organizations and "Arab charity organizations" of aiding the militants.

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### 'Palestinian state not sure' — Peres

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Monday that self rule would not necessarily lead to a fully-fledged Palestinian state, but did not spell out the alternatives. "Autonomy and interim accords will not necessarily lead to a Palestinian state and may end in something else," Mr. Peres told the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. "We have to find new formulas by creating demilitarized zones, for example, and accepting the idea of zones without sovereignty between Israel and the Palestinians. In negotiations it is the unusual solutions which last. The final status of the Palestinian territories will be based on a series of totally new ideas." But Mr. Peres gave no further details, even when challenged by right-wing opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu to explain "these mysterious" ideas. "In fact this government is helping (PLO chief) Yasser Arafat to establish a Palestinian state in the heart of greater Israel," said Mr. Netanyahu, the leader of the Likud Party. Mr. Peres said Israel was not yet ready to begin the final status negotiations because the dispute over Jerusalem "would lead to an explosion."

## Israeli army may speed up Jenin pullout

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel could speed up its withdrawal from Jenin, the first Palestinian town to be evacuated on the West Bank under the Sept. 28 autonomy accord, a senior foreign ministry official said Monday.

"We may make an effort at the request of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to advance the date of the end of the Jenin withdrawal" due to start Wednesday and be complete by Nov. 19, the foreign ministry director general, Uri Savir, said.

"Terrorism must be confronted firmly from the first day on the West Bank because time is limited," he added, saying it was only in March that the self-rule authority began to "take the necessary measures" to clamp down on opposition to the autonomy accord.

Palestinian police launched a series of sweeps, arresting members of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and the Islamic Jihad which have carried out the majority of anti-Israeli attacks.

The Jewish state warned the PNA on Sunday that it could reconsider the redeployment timetable if there were any further bloody attacks.

In a symbolic gesture, the Israeli army earlier this month quit four Palestinian villages on the West Bank ending 28 years of occupation.

"If the evacuated towns turn into sanctuaries for terrorists, we will be able to re-examine the timetable for redeployment," said Environment Minister Yossi Sarid.

Agriculture Minister Yaakov Tsur warned on Israeli radio: "There could be many obstacles to implementing (the redeployment) according to the timetable. It is very clear that Israel cannot accept terrorism with the peace process."

Special arrangements have been made for the flashpoint town of Hebron where soldiers will remain to protect 400 settlers living among 120,000 Palestinians.

The army and the government were Monday at loggerheads over the cost of the West Bank redeployment which the commander of the region, General Ilan Biran,

estimated would cost a billion dollars, twice the amount allocated in the budget by the finance ministry.

Mr. Savir stressed that

"half a dozen terrorists could sabotage the whole process if the Palestinian Authority does not meet the challenge."

"Terrorism must be confronted firmly from the first day on the West Bank because time is limited," he added, saying it was only in March that the self-rule authority began to "take the necessary measures" to clamp down on opposition to the autonomy accord.

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ace process."

With the deadline for with-

drawal from Jenin fast

approaching, Israeli troops

arrested six militants from

Hamas and Islamic Jihad in

the town and surrounding vil-

lages on Sunday, sources said.

The withdrawal from all

Palestinian towns except

Hebron is set to begin on

Wednesday.

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The concept of

economic development of the

Middle East and taking

advantage of the business

opportunities in the region in

an era of peace appears to

have become internationally

accepted, His Royal High-

ness Crown Prince Hassan said Tuesday.

The Crown Prince cited the

expected attendance of

government leaders and

businessmen from 63 coun-

tries at next week's Middle

East and North Africa (MENA)

summit as one of the

strongest signs of this

acceptance, adding that Jordan

was making sure-footed

moves towards realising the

English-language daily Arab

News.

The attack took place in

Bisha village in Bisha, a

mountainous tribal region of

Saudi Arabia's remote west-

ern province of Asir. More

than 30 people are still in

intensive care units.

Police and civilians

searched the rugged terrain after

the authorities identified the

prime suspect as Abdullah

Ben Mohammad Ben Sa'ad

Al Amri, a Saudi national

also known as Ben Muam-

mar.

A second vessel, the Syrian

military ship Al Assad, left

with 350 more Palestinians

from the southern Cypriot

port of Larnaca the same day

as the death toll eight, hospital

sources said.

Meanwhile, the 10-day

ordeal of more than 600

Palestinians who fled Libya

drew to a close Monday as they

headed for a new life in

Syria but the fate of about 30

others was unresolved.

A first group of 270 work-

ers and their families wound

up at the desert camp on

the Egyptian-Libyan border,

where conditions have

markedly worsened in recent

days, U.N. officials say.

Dozens of children are suffer-

ing from diarrhoea and clean

water is lacking, U.N. officials

say.

Some 43 others, including

24 children, stayed behind on

board the Greek-owned car

ferry Countess M which

along with its 58-strong crew

has been

Argentina increases security after Iran diplomat is attacked

Buenos Aires (R) — Argentina has stepped up security measures for Iranian diplomats after one of Iran's top envoys was shot and wounded by a motorcyclist in Buenos Aires.

Hassanali Rajabi Yazdi, 33, business attaché and the most senior Iranian diplomat in Argentina, was driving with his wife and two young children through the wealthy Belgrano neighbourhood late on Saturday night, when a motorcyclist shot him at point blank range.

"Until we find out what exactly happened we will enforce strict security around Iranian diplomats," Interior Minister Carlos Corach said on Sunday, describing the attack on the business attaché as a "worrying development."

Mr. Yazdi managed to drive to the nearby Sagrada Familia private hospital after the attack where he underwent an operation. His condition was described as favourable.

Doctors said none of the diplomat's vital organs had been hit during the attack. His wife and two children were unharmed.

"The patient is in a delicate condition but he is progressing in an acceptable way and he is awake and lucid," said Hector Pezzola of the Sagrada Familia hospital.

President Carlos Menem, who is in New York for the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, expressed concern but said nobody should jump to conclusions about the motives for the attack.

"Let's wait for the result of the investigations before we call it a politically motivated attack," the private DYN news agency quoted him as saying.

Argentina's state Telam news agency quoted the deputy Iranian foreign minister of accusing "Zionist elements" for a rule in the attack in a bid to damage Argentine-Iran ties.

Iran's official news agency, IRNA, said in a report from Madrid that a caller from an unknown "Zionist group" claimed responsibility for shooting Mr. Yazdi in retaliation for the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires.

After the deadly attack, President Menem said there was proof of Iranian involvement but he then backtracked as little evidence was found to support his allegation.

Israel, the United States and the local Jewish community have said that Iran was behind the bombing.

Iran and Argentina have maintained minimal relations since the July 1994 bombing of the AMIA community centre in Buenos Aires, which killed 86 people.

Juan Jose Qaleano, the judge investigating the AMIA case, said he had proof of Iranian involvement but has not presented sufficient evidence to enable the supreme court to start international legal proceedings.

## Hamas aims at political party, keeps options open on election

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) has decided to set up a political party although the radical group is still divided on whether to contest the Palestinian self-rule elections.

"There is a decision to form a party," said Emad Faluji, a prominent Hamas member who publishes its weekly Al Watan.

He said the party would take part in political life and could run in the elections due early next year after the Israeli army pulls out of West Bank towns to extend Palestinian autonomy.

But Mr. Faluji believed it was unlikely that Hamas, which rejects the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accords with Israel that launched self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in May 1994, would contest the polls.

"If the new parliament is based on the Oslo agreements, we cannot be part of it," he said, referring to the launch of autonomy. "Any way the elections are too far off and we don't have a clear

election law yet."

On the reconciliation process launched with the Palestinian Authority, Mr. Faluji said Hamas wanted "quick, serious and intense talks."

"We must overcome the problems of the past and learn from our Gaza experience to avoid a repetition in the West Bank of mistakes both sides made," he told AFP.

Hamas and another fundamentalist group, the small-armed Islamic Jihad, have carried out a series of suicide bombings which killed dozens of Israelis, in a bid to sabotage the peace process.

The attacks blocked rapprochement efforts launched after clashes between Palestinian police and Hamas supporters late September that left 12 people dead and scores injured.

In a revival of reconciliation efforts this month, PLO leader Yasser Arafat freed two Hamas leaders, Ahmad Bahr and Mahmoud Al Zahhar, and agreed to talk with the group in a third country. Cairo has offered to host the

negotiations. The head of the self-rule authority also invited Hamas to join in the elections to a Palestinian self-rule council planned for January. But Hamas itself appears split on how far to go.

Upon his release from jail on the eve of the spread of self-rule to the West Bank, Sheikh Bahr said, "If the participation of Hamas in the elections is of benefit to the Palestinian people, it will take part."

While Gaza is the movement's strongest base, Hebron in the West Bank is also a Hamas stronghold. The group has won professional and student union elections this year in Ramallah and Nablus, likewise on the West Bank.

"We have a considerable following in the West Bank, not less than in Gaza," Mr. Faluji said.

Any political role for Hamas, however, depends on an agreement with Mr. Arafat who insists that the movement renounce violence against Israel.

Hamas refuses to commit

itself in public but Mr. Faluji indicated that it had agreed to suspend attacks from within the autonomous areas at least for the duration of the talks.

A reconciliation team of Hamas members has obtained from both the movement and Mr. Arafat a pledge to "avoid creating problems and tension during the talks, and clearly, we have respected this request so far," he said.

"We can't pretend there is an agreement to freeze military operations," Mr. Faluji added.

"It depends on the talks, it depends on Israel, whether it will release all Palestinian prisoners and stop shooting protesters... there are many issues. Is Israel ready to pay the price for Hamas to half its operations?"

Israel sealed off the Gaza Strip and West Bank for several weeks, up until last Tuesday, to guard against Hamas and Islamic Jihad attacks. Islamic Jihad has said it would boycott the elections and keep up attacks.

Elections, militants keep Mubarak at home

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has stayed away from the U.N. 50th anniversary celebrations in New York this week because he is busy with plans for forthcoming parliamentary elections, a government official said.

But some analysts said Mr. Mubarak feared militants bent on overthrowing him would try restage an attack that nearly cost him his life in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in June.

Foreign Minister Amr Musa is representing Egypt at the U.N. celebrations.

Nabil Osman, head of the state information service, said Mr. Mubarak never intended to join the U.N. party because he was too busy at home.

Mr. Mubarak has set Nov. 29 as the date for the elections, which take place every five years. All legal opposition parties have announced they will nominate candidates for the 444-seat assembly, unlike the 1990 elections that they boycotted.

Political analyst Hala Mostafa said Mr. Mubarak wanted to be in Cairo in the run-up to the elections because they come at the end of a particularly tense year for the government.

Few doubt a victory for Mr. Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP), which has won over three-quarters of the seats in every poll it has contested, but government crackdown on the popular but outlawed Muslim Brotherhood group has increased tension.

"These elections are taking place in a year that has been politically charged. There is an atmosphere of confrontation between the authorities and the Muslim Brotherhood which is unprecedented," Mr. Mostafa said.

Some analysts said more than internal politics persuaded Mr. Mubarak to stay away from celebrations commemorating an organization of which he is a keen supporter.

"It's easy to explain why Mubarak didn't go to New York. It's because of this Addis Ababa affair. It has to do with security reasons," Hussein Amin, former Egyptian ambassador to Algeria and a writer on Islamic issues, told Reuters.

"It is for his safety. I think Mubarak in future will not be travelling abroad a lot," he added.

The militant Al Gamma Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group), which launched a campaign to overthrow the government and set up a strict Islamic state, claimed responsibility for the attempt on Mr. Mubarak's life in June and has vowed it would continue to target him.

The group's spiritual leader, blind cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, was convicted along with nine of his followers in New York last month on charges that included plotting to assassinate Mr. Mubarak during one of his visits to the U.S.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Pollard appeals to court to win Israeli citizenship

TEL AVIV (AP) — Convicted spy Jonathan Pollard appealed to the supreme court after the government turned down his request for Israeli citizenship, his lawyer said Monday. Mr. Pollard, arrested in 1985, is serving a life prison term in the United States for spying for Israel. Earlier this year, he applied for Israeli citizenship in hopes that it could improve his chances at a January parole hearing. However, the interior ministry said at the time that Israel does not normally grant citizenship to Jews until they immigrate. Mr. Pollard's appeal filed Sunday, is based on a statute under which Jews are granted citizenship if they have done a service for Israel, regardless of where they live, said his lawyer, Larry Dub. He noted that Israel has granted citizenship to Jews abroad in the past, including Soviet dissidents who were not permitted to leave the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s. Mr. Dub said Israeli legislators have submitted a bill under which Mr. Pollard would be granted citizenship. A first reading was scheduled for next month, the lawyer said.

**U.S. forces display firepower in Kuwait**

UDAIRI (AFP) — U.S. artillery fired multiple launch rocket system ground-to-ground missiles in Kuwait for the first time since the 1991 Gulf war during exercises in the emirate on Sunday, army officers said. The troops, based at Fort Hood, Texas, were taking part in training exercises at a desert firing range at Udaire, 45 kilometres south of the border with Iraq and were watched by Kuwaiti officers. Two systems, each firing three missiles at a time, were tested by soldiers from a 1,500-strong contingent that arrived in the emirate on Aug. 22 to take part in joint manoeuvres with Kuwaiti forces after rising tension with Iraq. The troops from the First Cavalry Division are due to be replaced in the next few days by soldiers from Fort Carson, Colorado. Captain Austin Johnson told AFP. The U.S. maintains 350 soldiers at Doha camp, north of Kuwait City, under a common defence pact, in addition to the forces brought in for manoeuvres after Washington said it had spotted unusual troop movements in Iraq in July and August.

**Iranian sentenced to death retracts claim**

SHARJAH (AFP) — An Iranian sentenced to death for heresy for calling himself a "messenger of God" withdrew his claim and repented before an appeals court on Monday. Lawyers said, "I am not a messenger of God. I have no message to give, but I'm a Muslim seeking the strict application of the Koran." Hassan Ghohani Hussein Dana was quoted as telling the judges in Sharjah, one of the seven members of the United Arab Emirates. The Iranian had until now insisted that God had asked him to deliver a message to the people on five continents. Mr. Dana, 36, retracted his claim during a closed-door hearing that followed two hours of negotiations involving his court-appointed lawyer and a cleric. The case has been adjourned until Oct. 31.

**Israelis have mental problems**

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Twenty per cent of Israelis suffer from mental problems but only half of them turn to specialists for help. Health Minister Efraim Sneh said Monday, "Israelis seem to be ashamed of these problems and prefer to see their family doctor, and 85 per cent take tranquilisers like valium without seeing a specialist," he told journalists. "Twenty per cent of Israelis suffer in one way or another from psychological or mental troubles and need attention but only 50 per cent of them go to a psychiatrist or a psychologist," said Dr. Sneh. "The most common symptoms are vague pains, fatigue, insomnia and bad moods, not fear or depression."

**French defence minister visits UAE**

ABU DHABI (AFP) — France's Defence Minister Charles Millon arrived here Monday for talks with President Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), French embassy officials said. Mr. Millon was to travel later in the day to Qatar, they added. France and the UAE struck a deal in January to allow Abu Dhabi to ask for French military support and share intelligence, while Paris and Doha signed a similar agreement in August 1994. French companies provide 70 per cent of the military equipment for Qatar's armed forces and much of the material for the UAE. In April 1993, the UAE bought 436 LeClerc tanks, built by GIAT Industries, for 20 billion francs (\$3.9 billion). Abu Dhabi received its first shipment in November 1994. In 1988, France sold 36 Mirage 2000 fighter-bombers to the UAE.

**Hizbullah keep out photographers from stronghold**

BEIRUT (AFP) — The Iranian-backed Hizbullah are on their guard against photographers and cameramen in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital, to the point of beating up Russian tourists. A spokesman for the Russian news agency Novosti said Monday that armed Hizbullah guards attacked a Russian couple last week. Tourists Stanislav Avougin and his wife were briefly hospitalized. They were accompanying a Russian delegation of engineers, businessmen and journalists on a visit to a real-estate company in the Haret Hreik district of the southern suburbs, a Hizbullah stronghold. The couple strayed from the group and began taking photographs near a Hizbullah office when the guards stepped in. Mr. Stanislav was beaten up and his wife who rushed to help was also hit and pushed. Their camera was confiscated for several hours before being returned, only after Hizbullah made sure their office and guards were not photographed, the Russian spokesman said. On Sunday, a French journalist with the European television network TV5 also had his camera confiscated after he filmed around the southern suburbs.

## Iraq increases flour, vegetable oil rations

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi government has raised the monthly ration for flour to seven kilogrammes a person from six kilogrammes a person to foreign exchange to buy food for the people, it added.

The official statement did not explain where the extra flour would come from. The cereal crop this year is expected to fall to 2.53 million tonnes, compared to 2.82 million in 1993/94 and 3.45 million in 1989/90, before sanctions.

The statement also announced increases of more than 150 per cent in the prices the state pays farmers for their rice and maize. For the best rice, for example, the price rises to 400,000 dinars (about \$160) a tonne, from 150,000 dinars (\$60).

The increase compensates to some extent for inflation, which for foodstuffs was on average about 14 per cent a month between June 1993 and August 1995, according to FAO figures.

## Killer of Italian doctor said detained in Somalia

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Militiamen loyal to Somali warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed have captured the gunman who shot and killed an Italian woman doctor and wounded an Italian biologist in the Somali town of Merca.

Caritas-Italy also runs four schools with 2,500 pupils in Merca, which is under Gen. Aideed's control.

The radio said Gen. Aideed's self-styled "government" formed in June, had sent its "interior minister" to Merca for further investigations in to the attack.

Fumagalli's remains, Andreoli and four other Caritas-Italy workers were airlifted to the Kenyan capital Nairobi on Sunday.

Both Italians were working for the humanitarian organisation Caritas-Italy.

The radio said Abdil Abdulkadir admitted killing Fumagalli when the Aideed's militiamen arrested him 17 kilometres south of Merca.

Merca is a hotbed of Muslim fundamentalism, but it was impossible to immediately say if religion had anything to do with the shooting.

## U.S. television preaches gospel in S. Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — Nestled between the Israeli army headquarters and their proxy militia in occupied southern Lebanon, a television station run by U.S. evangelist magnate Pat Robertson is preaching the gospel.

Twelve years ago Middle East Television (METV) decided to carry its evangelist mission to the region and chose to set up house in Lebanon.

"For Christians like Pat Robertson, the Middle East in general and Lebanon is sacred Biblical group. So it was important and logical to be here," said Jo Ayad, METV's news editor in chief.

"Our first goal is to preach the gospel," he said.

In addition to a daily one-hour religious programme, including Mr. Robertson's own "The 700 Club," METV offers a variety of U.S. sitcoms, tele-shopping and a

30-minute news bulletin each day.

METV belongs to Mr. Robertson's \$140-million television empire which includes the U.S.-based Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) and Family Channel, the 10th biggest cable station in the United States.

Most of its 35 employees here are Lebanese and "preferably Christians," said Mr. Ayad, and the station operates on a \$1 million annual budget 24 hours a day.

Two 20-kilowatt relay stations enable audiences in parts of Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Syria to tune in.

Many of those who tune in have alternately accused METV of broadcasting Israeli propaganda or of backing the Israeli-trained and financed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

"We are not doing any propaganda for anyone. We're an American com-

pany, our budget is 100 per cent American. We don't get a penny from Israel," said Mr. Ayad.

But the station's physical appearance and its operating methods fail to persuade many that it is as independent and unbiased as it says it is.

METV is located in a Lebanese-government-owned building which housed a French officers' club during the French mandate on Lebanon and is stuck between SLA and Israeli army headquarters in Marjayoun.

"The building was the only one available when we came here. Everything else was devastated by the war. Our presence in this building does not reflect our political line. We put a lot of money into restoring it," Mr. Ayad said.

METV imports its video equipment directly from the United States using express mail and an Israeli mailing address, said one of seven employees in charge of Arabic subtitles for the American

programmes.

"People cannot seem to understand that we are Lebanese citizens working in the 'security zone' and that we are not pro-Israelis," said Mr. Ayad.

"Israel cannot censor us because we are Lebanese in Lebanon. We are not in Israel here," he said in reference to the 850-square-kilometre buffer zone which Israel has occupied since 1985.

And yet METV reporters cannot conduct interviews north of the zone "because people on the other side do not trust us and accuse us of being pro-Israeli," said Mr. Ayad.

"I tried to see a few occasions to contact Lebanese leaders like (Parliament Speaker Nabih) Berri for interviews but I was systematically turned down," he added.

"But if something happens across the border in Israel all we need to do is get in the car and cross the border," he said.

"I gave the names of the U.S.

WEATHER



## German SPD crisis deepens after Berlin election disaster

BONN (R) — Germany's opposition Social Democrats (SPD) met Monday to draw conclusions from an election beating in their one-time stronghold of Berlin, the result of months of wrangling and failure to shape new policies.

The SPD crashed to just 23.6 per cent in Sunday's state election in the city where former Chancellor Willy Brandt used to score more than 60 per cent as mayor in the 1960s.

It was the centre-left party's fifth worst showing in 174 state and national elections since 1945.

Commentators and party officials left no doubt where they thought the blame lay. "Big mistakes were made here in Bonn over the summer," new party manager Franz Müntefering told west German radio as the party executive, including Chairman Rudolf Scharping

and rivals Gerhard Schröder and Oskar Lafontaine, met in Bonn.

"We must make it clear that the personal wrangling in Bonn has to stop. I hope everyone has now understood where it leads."

Commentators were damning of the once-mighty party which has seen its nationwide ratings slide to post-war lows.

They wondered how much longer the lacklustre Scharping, already the subject of countless party coup rumours after a summer of fighting off Mr. Schröder, could hang on.

Exit surveys taken in Berlin showed his personal rating had plunged to almost unprecedented depths for any party leader.

"The air for Scharping has got so thin, not only in Berlin, that it's hardly enough to breathe. And Schröder, Lafontaine and co. are certainly not rushing

to resuscitate him," said the daily *Saarbrücker Zeitung*.

But the air is also getting thin for the whole party, which like other European sister movements is desperately seeking a new message as its traditional working-class base disappears. It has cast envious glances at the revamp which Tony Blair has given Britain's Labour Party.

German voters seem less and less sure what the SPD stands for.

In Berlin the big gains went to parties with sharp profiles — the east German reform communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), which took 14.6 per cent and the leftist-ecologist Greens, with 13.2 per cent.

"The problem of the SPD is that it is stuck in the middle and is in danger of being ground away — in the west between the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the

Greens, and in the east between the CDU and the PDS," SPD Member of Parliament Thomas Krueger said.

The SPD was unable to maintain any profile in Berlin as the junior partner in a coalition with Chancellor Helmut Kohl's CDU, which slipped three points to 37.4 per cent in the poll. But the SPD has also been unable to grab attention in opposition in Bonn.

"People don't think the SPD has economic competence any more," ZDF national television commented. "In Berlin, people don't even think it would do a better job at fighting unemployment than the

CDU." That's an alarm signal for all Social Democrats. It shows the causes of the defeat go deep and that questions of personalities alone are not nearly enough to explain the debacle."



File photo of former South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo (Left), at the centre of a \$500 million slush fund scandal, with his security chief Lee Hyong-Woo in the presidential Blue House in February 1988 (AFP photo)

## S. Korea's Roh faces slush fund probe

SEOUL (R) — Former South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo Monday faced mounting calls to explain a 48.5 billion won (\$63 million) political slush fund managed by his one-time top security aide.

The stock market slipped in a fit of anxiety over the allegations by the aide, with banking shares particularly hurt by worries that an investigation of the scandal might extend to all banks.

Opposition parties demanded Mr. Roh's arrest while the ruling Democratic Liberal Party said the former military-backed president must be held to account.

"Senior members of our party have agreed that ex-President Roh can't avoid investigation as his former security chief said he received the money directly from him," a ruling party spokesman told reporters.

Finance and Economy Minister Hong Jae-Hyong told reporters tax authorities will probe corporations or individuals to find out if they evaded taxes in connection with the scandal.

An opposition Democratic Party spokesman demanded Mr.

Roh apologise for the scandal that threatens to lift the lid on decades of political corruption.

Former President Roh should be arrested immediately and investigated," the spokesman said.

The former security aide, Lee Hyun-Woo, stepped forward Sunday to declare he personally managed what he described as a 48.5 billion won (\$64 million) slush fund used by Mr. Roh.

On Sunday state media reported Mr. Lee as telling prosecutors the size of the slush fund was 30 billion won (\$39 million).

But on Monday he said Mr. Roh withdrew 12.1 billion won (\$16 million) at the end of his five-year term in 1993 and the balance of 36.4 billion won (\$47 million) from the fund was now kept in the Shinhan Bank.

Mr. Roh has made no public comment since the scandal broke Thursday last week when an opposition lawmaker accused him of controlling 400 billion won (\$522 million) of slush money.

He has declined all comment since Mr. Lee's statement. Earlier, his office quoted him as denying any wrongdoing.

Yonhap News Agency Monday quoted Mr. Roh's personal secretary Park Young-Hoon as saying: "We don't have any plan to announce our position in connection with this case today".

Mr. Park was quoted as saying Mr. Roh ordered Mr. Lee to open the Shinhan accounts but did not know details about how they were operated and was "surprised to hear the accounts held part of the slush funds".

Mr. Lee, once Mr. Roh's top bodyguard and later director of the Agency for National Security Planning, Seoul's equivalent of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, said the money was used to cover a shortfall in the president's office budget.

He told reporters Monday he deposited and withdrew money from the accounts on Mr. Roh's instructions.

Asked by a reporter whether Mr. Roh knew that tens of billions of won was left over from a political fund, Mr. Lee said: "He roughly knew although he did not know the exact size."

## Singer pulls out of Irish TV show

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP) — Rickie Lee Jones pulled out of an Irish television show after producers refused to allow her to sing a song that could offend some religious sensibilities. The state RTE television network said it feared the song — called "The Altar Boy" — would be misinterpreted in Ireland, where several Catholic priests have been accused of sexually abusing altar boys. Jones said RTE's decision not to let her sing the song on the "Kenny Live" programme on Saturday, was "based on current news and not on the lyrical content of my work. Had I not been asked to withdraw this song on this basis, I might have been performing another song. But to do so under these circumstances would be to condone censorship," she said. The Altar Boy, written three years ago, tells the story of a chaste man who strived to maintain his commitment to the pure faith in the face of tremendous temptation," Jones said. 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# World News



Security forces prepare for a cordon-and-search operation in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo following tight security measures enforced in the wake of Tamil Tiger guerrilla attacks on key oil reserves (AFP photo)

## Russia closes registration for parliamentary polls

MOSCOW (R) — More than 40 political parties submitted applications to run in Russia's parliamentary election before Sunday's midnight deadline but only eight of them can be confirmed they will be allowed into the race.

The deputy head of the Central Electoral Commission, Alexander Ivanchenko, told a news conference Monday that most of the 43 applicants had turned up with the required 200,000 signatures of support in the final hours of the countdown.

The deadline passed before commission staff had finished stamping the petitions of support for the Democratic Russia Movement, so the group which led President Boris Yeltsin to power in 1990 is out of the contest, Mr. Ivanchenko said.

But Mr. Yeltsin's key ally, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's bloc Our Home Is Russia, is one of

the eight groups whose registrations for the Dec. 17 poll have already been officially announced.

Also among the certain runners are the president's main opponents, Communists, Agrarians and ultra-nationalists.

Papers submitted by 35 other groupings will be scrutinised by the commission in the next 10 days for possible mistakes and deliberate violations of regulations, Mr. Ivanchenko said.

Electoral Commission head Nikolai Ryabov told reporters Saturday that police had investigated complaints of bribery, doorstep threats and other sharp practices by party workers.

He said reported abuses included buying votes, veiled threats and the widespread practice by many party workers of claiming the affiliation of well-known people, without their knowledge, to win support.

"We have seen certain

complaints to the Interior Ministry and they will take sanctions," Mr. Ryabov said.

Even after formal registration, a political bloc may be expelled from the election race for violating the rules of the campaign.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted members of the Electoral Commission as predicting that about 30 political parties would make it through to the polls at which 450 seats in the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, will be contested.

Mr. Ryabov has said having so many political parties is more likely to make a mess of the election than to contribute to democracy in Russia.

He has said voters may be confused by having to make their choices from a long line of parties, most of which lack any definite political orientation.

The atmosphere around the checks by the Electoral

Commission became more heated after a statement by Mr. Yeltsin last week that his aim was not to allow Communists or ultra-nationalists to win the poll.

The Communists struck back, saying that any pressure on them during the campaign should be viewed as inspired by Mr. Yeltsin.

Mr. Ivanchenko brushed off suggestions of possible bias.

The Central Electoral Commission bases its work on the appropriate federal law and presidential statements cannot effect its work," he said.

A total of 225 seats in the Duma will be decided by party lists. The other half will be decided by voting in single-mandate constituencies.

Competing parties will have to win at least five per cent of the total vote to enter the Duma.

## Yeltsin tightens grip on Foreign Ministry

UNITED NATIONS (R) — President Boris Yeltsin is extending his personal control over Russia's Foreign Ministry because of his dissatisfaction with Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, an aide said.

Sergei Medvedev, Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman, said Mr. Kozyrev remained in his post for now — despite fierce criticism of his work by the president and Russian parliament.

But he confirmed Mr. Yeltsin would name a deputy to help coordinate the ministry's work on his behalf, indicating that he is ready to accept almost complete personal responsibility for foreign policy.

"The president thinks it necessary to coordinate all foreign policy activities

himself," Mr. Medvedev told a news conference during the United Nations' 50th anniversary celebrations.

"He is not satisfied with the work of the foreign minister and sees ways to make the ministry's work better ... Boris Nikolayevich (Yeltsin) has drawn attention to the need to select a deputy to Kozyrev to carry out organisational work," he said.

Mr. Medvedev gave no firm clues to the long-term future of the embattled minister, but denied the doubts over his future were affecting his work alongside Mr. Yeltsin at the U.N. meeting.

Mr. Yeltsin said last Thursday he was looking for a replacement for Mr. Kozyrev, who has forged ties with the West in his five years in office but is accused in Russia of letting Moscow be sidelined in international peace moves for Bosnia.

He later clarified his comments by saying Mr. Kozyrev, 44, would stay for now, although a deputy would be appointed to help coordinate the ministry's work.

Mr. Yeltsin's apparent readiness to be even more closely identified with foreign policy than now is risky.

Nationalists and Communists have sharply criticised Russian foreign policy and only the adoption of a tougher stance against the West would be likely to appease them. Such moves could endanger ties with the West, Mr. Medvedev said.

## World leaders pay homage to U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The world's leaders from President Bill Clinton to Russia's Boris Yeltsin to Cuba's Fidel Castro paid homage to the United Nations on its 50th anniversary, but could not agree Sunday on how to make the world body more credible in the 21st century.

At the same time, there was no sentiment from any corner of the world to weaken the United Nations, with many developing countries demanding it take a far greater role in economic policy and projects that would benefit them.

The new agenda of the United Nations with its heavy emphasis on peacekeeping operations has impacted adversely on the development process," said President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka.

The North-South split between rich and poor countries was more evident than ever and Mr. Castro hammered away at the theme.

And the United States was criticised by its allies and foes alike for driving the world body to the brink of bankruptcy by owing \$1.25 billion, which a hostile Republican Congress will

not pay.

Mr. Clinton, who opened the three-day anniversary celebrations, said the world still needed the United Nations. "And so for another 50 years and beyond, you can count the United States in."

But Irish President Mary Robinson warned that "if we do not infuse the United Nations with a new strength of purpose and a new sense of direction I fear that the praise we give to the U.N. from this rostrum over these days will come in time to be read as its epitaph."

United Nations staff, however, this week are doing what they can do well — organising a world event which saw Mr. Clinton, Mr. Yeltsin, Mr. Castro and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on the same podium in the same two hours.

With more than 180 prime ministers, presidents, kings and other officials converging on New York for the largest summit in history, the main events went smoothly.

Portuguese President Mario Soares criticised the "outrageous situation" in East Timor, whose decolonisation he said had been "brutally interrupted" by 20 years of Indonesian

occupation.

And Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati condemned what he called United States "economic terrorism" and "self-aggrated leadership" in the United Nations.

But for sheer pageantry, it was Mr. Castro who played a starring role in the United Nations and on the streets of New York.

But minutes later Mr. Yeltsin said Russia would contribute troops to a peacekeeping force only if they were subject to a strict Security Council mandate, directly opposing Mr. Clinton's move to have it commanded by NATO.

The United States and Russia then differed over who should control future peacekeeping troops in Bosnia, a key issue in their Monday meeting in Hyde Park, New York.

Acid comments were not lacking as New Zealand and Japan attacked France and China again over their resumption of nuclear testing.

On Monday Mr. Clinton and Russia's President Yeltsin held a day-long meeting on the Balkans away from New York City.

Mr. Clinton pledged to

## 25 soldiers, 50 Tamil rebels killed in Sri Lankan fighting

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)

— At least 25 soldiers and 50 Tamil rebels were killed in northern Sri Lanka over the weekend in the bloodiest fighting in the latest military offensive launched last week to capture the guerrilla stronghold, a military official said Monday.

More than 100 soldiers were wounded in Sunday's fighting close to Jaffna, 300 kilometers north of Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, a military official said on condition of anonymity.

The government says its objective is to capture Jaffna, the headquarters of the Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam who have been fighting for a Tamil homeland in the north and east of Sri Lanka since 1983. More than 36,000 people have been killed.

But the rebel resistance toughened even as thou-

sands of soldiers, supported by battle tanks, artillery and warplanes, captured rebel regions close to Jaffna City. Military claims that the latest offensive launched last week is the biggest in the 12-year ethnic war.

Brigadier Sarah Munasinghe, the military spokesman, told reporters Sunday that at least 350 rebels and 76 soldiers had been killed in the first five days of the offensive code named "Operation Sun Rays."

Another 500 rebels and 243 soldiers have been injured in the fighting.

On Sunday, warplanes and field guns pounded guerrilla positions throughout the day but the rebels fought back fiercely with mortar, rocket and machine gun fire. Troops, who were only eight kilometers from Jaffna Saturday, could advance less than one kilometer for Sunday.

"We have taken additional security measures... These few weeks are very crucial because of the escalation of the offensive in Jaffna," said Dharmasiri Senanayake, the minister for media, tourism and avia-

tion, at a press briefing.

The international airport, state-owned radio and television stations and a government newspaper group were some of the installations that have additional security deployed, said Mr. Senanayake.

Police said at least 500 Tamils have been killed in cordon and search operations for rebels in Colombo. Their antecedents will be checked before they are released.

Peace talks between the two sides broke down last April and the rebels ended a three-month truce. More than 3,200 people have been killed since then.

Tamils, who comprise 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 17 million people, claim discrimination by the majority Sinhalese in education and jobs. The Sinhalese control the government and the military.

## Talks to resume as fighting continues in Chechnya

MOSCOW (AFP)

— Talks to resolve the Chechen conflict are set to resume Tuesday in Grozny amid repeated violations of a ceasefire which each side blamed on the other.

Several people were killed and others wounded in Russian shelling of villages southwest of the Chechen capital, a Chechen peace negotiator quoted by Interfax News Agency said Sunday.

A spokesman for the Russian military command in Chechnya said the artillery fire was in response to attacks by Chechen separatists. He said federal forces had come under fire from separatists 50 times in the past 24 hours and three Russian soldiers were wounded.

The talks were suspended on Oct. 9 after Anatoly

Romanov, the commander of the Russian forces in the tiny Muslim Caucasus republic, was seriously injured in an assassination attempt. He is still in a coma.

Negotiations on implementing a July 30 demilitarisation accord had been advancing painfully slowly even before they were suspended, but their resumption seems to indicate the Kremlin's desire to see them through in the face of hardliners in the military who want to impose a solution by force.

At least 30,000 people, most of them civilians, have died since Russian troops marched into Chechnya in December to quell a three-year-old independence drive.

In a cabinet meeting Thursday Gen. Grachev said the talks were suspended by Mr. Yeltsin last week went so

far as admitting that the conflict could have been avoided. "so many people have been killed there," he said. "It is the biggest disappointment of my presidency."

Mr. Yeltsin and his negotiating team still faces strong opposition from hardliners on both sides. Defence Minister Pavel Grachev claimed Friday that 6,000 Chechens, backed by mercenaries from the former Soviet Union and beyond, were planning large-scale military operations.

But with only two months from legislative elections, continuation of the military option would be a clear liability to Mr. Yeltsin's supporters.

The process of reconstruction in the devastated republic, meanwhile, has made no progress.

## Canada confused, upset by Quebec separatism

OTTAWA (AFP)

— Canadians living outside Quebec appear confused and upset by the desire of French-speaking Quebecers to leave the Canadian confederation.

Reform also has one parliamentary seat from Ontario, but none east of Ontario. It did not even field any candidates in Quebec, although it says that it will do so in the next general election — assuming Quebec is still part of Canada.

Quebecers go to the polls on Oct. 30 in a referendum on the question of independence from the rest of the nation.

In general, the confusion and lack of understanding for the nationalist aspirations of the Quebec separatists grows the further one is away from Quebec.

Everything bears witness to the fact that Mr. Kezeyev is continuing work, continuing to hold negotiations and continuing to carry out his duties," Mr. Medvedev said.

For reformers, the confusion and lack of understanding for the nationalist aspirations of the Quebec separatists grows the further one is away from Quebec.

In the prairies — Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta — and British Columbia, there is absolutely no comprehension of the need for a national Canadian policy of bilingualism and there appears to be resentment that Quebec's 7.3 million people

would want total constitutional equality with the rest of Canada in a nation of 29 million people.

These frustrations are probably best represented by the Reform Party which had overwhelming success in the west in the 1993 general election.

In the maritime provinces, the fear is that a nation physically divided into two — with a separate state of Quebec in the middle — will be as ungovernable as Pakistan was when it comprised eastern Bangladesh — and a western half, with India in between.

Ironically, the nationalist

fervour in Quebec has sparked off dreams by a small minority in British Columbia and Alberta of those two provinces setting up their own separate states, or perhaps merging into a new nation of western Canada.

And this in turn has made easterners worry as all the maritime provinces, composed of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, rely heavily on federal "transfer payments" to shore up their economy.

Two of the largest providers of funds are Alberta and British Columbia.

In New Brunswick, the fears are also cultural.

New Brunswick is the only province of Canada which is officially bilingual, with roughly 40 per cent of its population being Francophone and the other 60 per cent Anglophone.

The French of New Brunswick are, however, from different stock than the majority of Quebecers. They are Acadians and survived a British purge of

French speakers in the 18th century.

The 1991 Canadian census tends to support this view, showing that 1,000,000 Canadians living outside Quebec consider themselves Francophone, but less than 650,000 of them continued to speak French at home.

## Tourists flock to Asian sites on eclipse watch

ANGKOR WAT, Cambodia (R)

— Tourists flocked to some of Asia's most magnificent sites Monday to watch the rare shadow of a total solar eclipse.

In Cambodia, tourists were arriving in their hundreds at the magnificent 12th-century Angkor Wat Temple, the world's largest religious structure, for Tuesday's phenomenon.

In north India, many chose the abandoned Moghul city of Fatehpur Sikri near the Taj Mahal and the outlawed Khmer Rouge guerrilla group for an eclipse that will last one minute and 53 seconds from 1058 local time (0358 GMT).

The eclipse will fall partially on the Taj Mahal. Four hot-air balloons were to videotape the shadow of the moon as it raced across the dome of the fabled wonder of the world.

Many more watchers gathered at other places in India, Pakistan.

Observatories on the North Borneo Island to study the eclipse's effects on plants, birds and other animals.

According to ancient Hindu myth, an eclipse occurs when the angry monster Rahu tries to swallow the sun, and the only way to prevent the disaster is to scare Rahu away.

People across parts of South and Southeast Asia will bang drums and pots and pans Tuesday to scare Rahu away.

Brisk sales of protective wear have been reported across Asia and a debate raged in India between nationalists and astrologers over the effects of the eclipse.

In Thailand Tuesday's will be viewed clearly in some provinces and partially in Bangkok.

# Opinion & Analysis

Jordan Times, Tuesday, October 24, 1995

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## Jordan Times

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## MENA deserves chance

LESS THAN a week is left before the convening of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit here in Amman on Oct. 29. With preparatory work in full swing to ensure the success of the conference, we are hoping that the outcome would place Jordan not only firmly on the political map of the region, but also make the Kingdom an attractive centre for investment and economic project launching.

While it is true that we cannot count on reaping automatic and immediate economic dividends from MENA, we can at least expect that the hard work we have put in preparing and holding it will serve two goals at once. These are: focusing the attention of the international community on the possibilities of peace, stability and progress in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as gaining for Jordan itself maximum advantage from the effort it has expended so far as the principal organiser of the conference.

When we talk about peace we certainly have more in mind than reaching political settlements between Israel and the Arab countries. The kind of peace that we hope would flourish should encompass inter-Arab relations which remain strained by past events and festered by mutual mistrust and suspicions.

The Arab-Israeli conflict has dwarfed the Arab-Arab disputes for so long that it is high time that cooperation and coordination among Arab capitals assumed a higher profile on our agenda for the present and future. It would be tragic if resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict turns out to be easier than settling inter-Arab feuds and conflicts of interest.

Through joint economic planning and coordination we have the best opportunity to heal all such wounds and establish the kind of regional institutions that would ensure for political settlements continuity and success. So it is indeed with sadness that we notice that some Arab capitals are hardly on talking terms, and that a number of those capitals have opted to stay away from Amman between Oct. 29 and 31 in a bid to weaken the resolve to build on peace. But then it might well be MENA's job to prove they are wrong.

On the other hand, Jordan has done well just to show that the summit can succeed before it begins. This the Kingdom has done, we hope, by sparing no effort to prepare well for it.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily criticised the Arab leaders for only offering lip service to the Iraqi people over their present plight and for doing nothing to alleviate their suffering. By remaining passive, the Arab leaders are accessories to the crime of genocide in Iraq where four million people are facing death due to starvation and where 700,000 children died due to shortage of medicine and food as a result of the U.N.-imposed sanctions, said Samir Qtami. The writer said he was not demanding that the Arab countries lift the sanctions on Iraq because they are feeble to take such a step, but the Arab leaders should stop shedding crocodile tears over the sad situation in Iraq, should release the \$1.3 billion they hold as Iraqi deposits and immediately arrange for regular shipments of food and drugs to save Iraqis from starvation. By using the Iraqi people as human shields for the purpose of toppling the regime in Baghdad, the Arab leaders are accomplices to a crime being committed by the enemies of the Arab Nation, Dr. Qtami said. He said the whole world realises that the Iraqis no longer possess weapons of destruction and have complied with all U.N. resolutions, two facts that should justify the termination of the sanctions.

## The View from Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

# Muslims, blacks, and supreme America

WASHINGTON, D.C. — I have had the most enjoyable and educational experience this week of participating in a conference on U.S.-Arab relations while simultaneously following the reaction among the American establishment and middle class to the "million man march" — last week's gathering of about half a million black men in Washington to focus on what they can do to stop the deterioration and degeneration of the black family and community. While the two events were not directly related — my conference and the black march — they do seem to be related in a manner that tells us much about contemporary American political culture and its interaction with the world.

The predominant American reaction to events in the Arab World is a strong focus on the phenomenon of political Islam. Any discussion of the Arab World here quickly leads to the issue of Islamism, and, more specifically, the violence of some Islamists in Algeria, Egypt and Palestine or the political practice of so-called "Islamic" regimes in Iran or Sudan. The obvious and very concentrated American preoccupation with a small portion of political culture in the Arab-Islamic world is more than only sociologically interesting. I believe that it reveals much about the nature of U.S. political culture, and thus it behoves us to understand more intimately how and why the American establishment reacts as it does to the two phenomena in question here — political Islam, and the dynamic self-assertion of black men in the USA, led by the controversial leader of the Nation of Islam, Louis Farrakhan.

In both cases, Arab and Iranian Muslims or American black men are expressing a brand of defiance that the American establishment finds both disturbing and threatening. The common theme of Arabs and blacks, in broad terms, is that the prevalent American policies and values of the last century or so have grievously denied Arabs/Muslims and blacks two very important things — a sense of security for one's family rooted in improving material standards of living, and a sense of dignity and humanity rooted in the acceptance of one's culture and values by the mainstream majority of white Americans.

Both Arab Islamists and black Americans like Louis Farrakhan represent something that is more troubling to the American majority than mere defiance — they offer an alternative. They both express anger at their treatment by the now globalising American political culture, but

they also both express the will to organise their societies along moral and material lines that are somewhat different from the ways of the American majority. In fact, I suspect that the Islamist Middle East is the only place on earth today that is both trying to resist somewhat the wholesale transformation into a global America, while offering a credible alternative in terms of family, individual and communal values and governance systems. Others who tried to do the same by asserting their cultural validity and distinctiveness in the face of the American behemoth — such as China or India — have given up, and signed up for the promise of American dollars and glitter. Only the Arab and other Middle Eastern Islamists hold on to the possibility that human beings can express their humanity and organise their societies in ways not necessarily made in the USA.

The American ideological majority finds this most incomprehensible, bewildering and even threatening, and thus American policy responds with strong military and economic and diplomatic force against Middle East Islamists. Few people in the USA have the time, desire or capacity to recognise that the violent Islamists who kill and oppress in the Middle East are in fact a small minority that is rejected by the majority of Arabs. The U.S. finds it useful to exaggerate the importance and power of Middle Eastern Islamists, and to emphasise the great danger it sees to U.S. interests should any Islamists come to power in places other than Iran and Sudan. The U.S. response to Middle Eastern Islamists is very interesting for its lack of thoughtfulness and rationality and democratic pluralism, because that response essentially comprises a narrow combination of violence by local proxies (Arab governments and Israel), threats by the USA, and an odd brand of old-fashioned moralising and preaching. The idea one hears so often from American officials — that they respect Islam but oppose violence — is not very credible because it is degraded by the obvious political vagrancy of the U.S. government's policy of ignoring the worsening suffering of the majority of Muslims in the Middle East, while perpetuating aid, political and other policies that tend to weaken the legitimacy of many Arab governments while promoting the credibility of opposition movements, even some that engage in violence.

The American government's attitude to American blacks is similar, but not so obvious. The single greatest instrument of U.S. government policy towards urban black men is the criminal justice system, especially jails. There are more black men in jails today than there are in higher education institutions. No wonder that some half a million black men heeded the call of Louis Farrakhan last week. The U.S. establishment's response to Farrakhan and his half million men was fascinating to watch. The mainstream majority here prefers to deny the validity of the message of black suffering and despair by disqualifying the credentials of the messenger — the very controversial Mr. Farrakhan. This strategy will only backfire. I would guess, because it will simply perpetuate the conditions in poor neighbourhoods that gave rise to the message and the messenger in the first place. It is interesting how similar are conditions in poor American slum neighbourhoods and poor Arab slum neighbourhoods today.

Central Cairo and central Detroit have suddenly come very close together. It is no surprise that American blacks and Middle Eastern Muslims should both express anger at the dominant American political power structure, and that they should express that anger in a vocabulary of nationalist particularity and exclusivism that resists total subservience to the hegemony of American power. It is also interesting to see the central role of religion and religious leaders in leading the resistance to American domination. And finally, it is interesting to see the white power majority in the USA reacting in a similar way to the defiance of beaten men in the Middle East and in poor, urban America — reacting with violence, threats, preaching and a general desire to ignore the real problems of the world rather than to come to grips with them.

Many of the thoughts of Louis Farrakhan deserve to be criticised and ridiculed, just as many of the actions or ideas of Islamists in the Middle East can be criticised and objected to. But this is political immaturity and even irresponsibility, if it leads the U.S. government and power elite to ignore the suffering and needs of the millions of people who live in the tortured societies whence Farrakhan and M. Eastern Islamists emanate. If the messengers and even the messages are problematic for America, the underlying human needs of communities in despair should not be. These are instructive yet troubling times in America, both for America and the world that cannot any longer escape its powerful embrace.

## Is it race or class that is splitting America?

By Gwynne Dyer

IS AMERICA a society gradually splitting apart along racial lines, as the more apocalyptic commentators on the O.J. Simpson verdict would have us believe? Of course not. It is splitting, but the lines are about class, not race.

"Most whites are basically indifferent to blacks, but they are certainly not trying to oppress them or hold them down," wrote Jared Taylor in his dissenting book about the failure of race relations in America, "Paved With Good Intentions." "If the U.S. has a real problem, it is not whites hating blacks. It is much more a problem of blacks hating whites."

Taylor is closer to the truth than most people, but the definitions need to be tightened. Not all blacks hate whites, but the black under-class does, and who could blame them? (Like most oppressed people, they also hate themselves, which is why black teen-age males in the U.S. are six times likelier to be murdered — almost always by other blacks — than white teen-age males.)

Taylor is also right in saying that most American whites do not hate blacks. If they did, Colin Powell could never think of running for president, for over 80 per cent of American voters are still white. But most middle-class Americans of all races sense the hatred of the black under-class and are terrified by it.

And many of the police who man the front lines against this black under-class in America's big cities are racist, because that is what their working environment teaches them. Relatively few are as bad as ex-Los Angeles Police Department detective Mark Fuhrman, the man whose tape-recorded racist ravings



happened? Because in both cases an overwhelming weight of evidence against the accused was swept aside by racist preconceptions of the truth.

Yet there is no race war brewing in the U.S. It is a class war, and there are blacks on both sides of the barricades.

The African-American population of the United States, according to the 1990 census, was about 30 million, or just around one-eighth of the total. According to the census rules, a household income of \$35,000 a year makes a family middle-class — and 9 million blacks met that criterion.

Lyndon Johnson's Great Society worked. Affirmative action worked. At least one-third of American blacks, and probably more, have escaped from the under-class. In 1970, only 15.3 per cent of blacks had any college education today the figure is 48.3 per cent (compared to 59.8 per cent for whites).

The new black middle class is especially visible in the inner ring of suburbs

they were caught in mid-stream by a shift in the political climate when only a third had already made it onto the middle class.

Blacks remain on the left, and everybody else has moved to the right," observes political scientist William Schneider of the American Enterprise Institute. "Blacks are the only constituency in this country who have no quarrel with Big Government. Big Government saved them from slavery in the 1860s, and rescued them from segregation in the 1970s."

Just as most American Catholics and Jews continued to vote Democratic for several generations after they escaped from the immigrant slums of the late 19th century, so do 90 per cent of African-Americans continue to vote Democratic today. But two-thirds of white males voted Republican in recent U.S. elections. In a blacklash that was more about economics and gender, than race, and governments elected by those 'angry white males' have stalled the process of

Moreover, those astonishing statistics about one-third of American blacks in their 20s being in jail, on probation or on parole at any given time actually underestimate the problem. For if another third of the black population has joined the middle class, then it means that literally half the young males in the under-class are trapped in the criminal justice system.

In the meantime, the nation's police are left with the job of containing the nihilistic, insurrectionary populations of the black ghettos, with no relief in sight. It makes the best of them bitter. The worst of them become Fuhrmans, and even middle class blacks like O.J. Simpson are not safe in their hands.

That's not to say that Simpson is not a murderer. But if he wasn't, Fuhrman would have framed him anyway.

Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman are dead, and no verdict would have brought them back. O.J. Simpson has filed for federal trademark registration of his name, listing over 120

## LETTERS

### Saving lives before MENA

To the Editor:

AT THE intersection outside our house the number of collisions peaked during the summer, at about a rate of one per week.

The damage ranged from minor, accompanied by much shouted acrimony, to major with the garden wall of the house diagonally opposite to ours, decimated and the occupants of the involved vehicles taken to hospital. Police have been summoned to the scene many times.

Then miraculously, one month ago, two small stop signs appeared. Alas, the one on our side of the junction was toppled after a mere two weeks and after lying on the ground for several days, vanished altogether.

At present, legion municipality workers are to be seen around West Amman busily erecting benches and other eye-pleasing features to impress MENA conference participants.

But it is probably too much to hope for the reappearance of our sign which might actually achieve something like saving life and limb.

Catherine Redden,  
Um Uthaina,  
Amman

### Demanding equal rights

To the Editor:

I CANNOT but totally agree with Mrs. Karen Asfour (Rights for Women, Jordan Times, October 22) on the need for Jordanian women to pass on their nationality to their children. I, for one, have had to renew my daughter's residence permit for the last 11 years just because the father is of a different nationality. She is a student at a Jordanian school and has been living in Jordan since 1984.

In most countries of the world one can obtain the citizenship of that country just by living there for a minimum of 5 years, regardless of the fact that one of the parents holds the citizenship by birth. I think it is time that we gave equal rights to all citizens, regardless of the sexes and thus be true to the democracy we all aspire to.



## Isolated Libya wants share of tourist market

CAIRO (AFP) — Foreign air travel may be banned because of a three-year-old U.N. embargo but Libya still hopes to put itself on the map by building up its tourism sector.

"We created a ministry of tourism three months ago because we are ready to develop this sector after having given priority to agriculture and industry," said Mohammad Abulhol, head of Libya's tourism council.

"Moreover, oil will run out one day and tourism could be a substitute," Mr. Abulhol told AFP.

Tripoli's plan to draw in foreigners comes as the country launches a campaign to throw out more than a million African workers.

The deportees are in the country illegally and burden a Libyan economy already reeling under sanctions, Mr. Abulhol said. "Tourists don't like to see these strange people wandering the streets. They want a clean country."

Since April 1992, Libya has been under an air embargo.

"This stupid and unfair embargo makes travelling more difficult, but it doesn't effect tourism. We will work it out," Mr. Abulhol said.

Last year, Libya had almost 95,000 tourists, mostly from Germany and Italy, he said. "Tourists are looking for new destinations and Libya offers some great treasures."

Chief among them, 2,000 kilometres of hardly touched beachline, the dunes of the Sahara as well as some unique Greco-Roman ruins, especially at Cyrene, known to the ancient world as Leptis Magna.

Libya also has prehistoric cave drawings at Machan-dus and in the Acaus mountains, and Islamic and Christian sites, notably a grotto in which Saint Mark prayed after fleeing Alexandria, Mr. Abulhol said.

He also pointed to a "modern monument": The giant artificial river project which Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi launched in 1983 across the Sahara.

Libya has drawn up with the WTO a master plan to revive its tourist infrastructure.

## Currency market heads for crisis

LONDON (AFP) — The French franc and sterling fell suddenly against the mark at midday Monday in trading marked by a high degree of anxiety about the financial and political situation on several fronts and particularly in Italy.

The franc fell below 3.53 to the mark to 3.5354 from 3.5178 late on Friday and the Bank of France maintained its emergency 24-hour rate at 7.0 per cent.

Share prices fell sharply in London, by 1.1 per cent, in Frankfurt by 2.91 per cent, in Paris by 1.36 per cent to the lowest point of the year, and by 1.42 per cent in Milan owing to political crisis in Italy.

In Paris a dealer commented: "There is an unpleasant feeling of calm before a storm. The climate is the case for currencies of countries having difficulty in meeting the Maastricht criteria."

At Banque Internationale de Placement in Paris, expert

the right-wing opposition. Silvio Berlusconi has tabled a no-confidence motion.

This might attract support from reformed Communists and bring down the technocratic government of Prime Minister Lamberto Dini, leaving Italy without a budget for next year.

In London, David Coleman, an analyst at Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, said: "The damage of the Italian political crisis is not confined to the lira but is also affecting most other currencies and particularly the French franc, sterling and dollar."

"This trend is likely to continue in the long term, and the mark will strengthen while other European currencies will remain under pressure. This is particularly the case for currencies of countries having difficulty in meeting the Maastricht criteria."

At Banque Internationale de Placement in Paris, expert

Christian Dargnat said: "European currencies are generally weak and this is helping the mark and Swiss franc, which serve as havens.

"The market would react badly if Dini fell," he warned.

The franc has been weak for several weeks because of deep scepticism that the French government can reduce the budget deficit to three per cent of gross domestic product in time to qualify as a founder of a single currency.

Another factor is suspicion that the French government might relax the policy to keep the franc strong: the so-called franc fort policy.

In Paris, where parliament is involved in tough debate about how to reduce the deficit in the 1990 draft budget, the finance ministry said Monday that the state still had to close a gap of 15 billion francs (\$3 billion) to achieve the planned deficit of 321.6 billion francs in this

year's budget. This was after allowance for special measures already adopted.

In London, sterling fell to below 2.19 marks to 2.1893 from 2.1911 initially and 2.2039 on Friday.

The dollar was very weak at 1.3890 marks from 1.3975 late on Friday and it dipped to 99.95 yen from 100.00 on Friday.

The chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, has warned that if steps are not taken soon to reduce the deficit, long-term interest rates will rise, causing great strains in the economy. Late on Friday the yield on 30-year treasury bonds rose to 6.35 per cent from 6.30 per cent.

In Germany on Monday a member of the central council of the Bundesbank, Ernst Welteke said that the likelihood that the German repurchase rate would fall from 4.05 per cent to less than 4.0 per cent had receded in recent weeks.

## Stable oil prices kill trading incentives

LONDON (R) — Oil derivatives, which promised to be one of the boom markets of the 1990s, are showing signs of running out of puff as shrinking business on the futures exchanges is mirrored in off-exchange market.

Oil price stability, evidenced by a drop in volatility in recent months to the lowest levels in several years, is one of the main problems. Low volatility kills hedging incentives and limits trading opportunities.

But some industry participants also point to fundamental obstacles which have blocked the development of the market.

They see a reluctance by many oil companies to hedge much of their oil output even when they think oil prices will fall.

"We don't hedge a significant part of our oil price risk," said Enterprise oil finance director Andrew Shilton.

"We don't believe fundamentally that our shareholders would want us to do that. If the oil price doubles and you denied yourself, say, a doubling in the oil price for an extended period shareholders would be annoyed," he added.

British independent Enterprise is among the most sensitive to oil price fluctuations with a \$1.00-a-barrel drop in oil prices reckoned by analysts to slash \$45 million from its cash flow. With oil prices down \$3.00 since May to below \$16.00, Enterprise shares have shed 20 per cent in the same period to \$40 per cent.

Enterprise's reluctance to embrace oil derivatives is typical of many oil companies, analysts say.

Research by Philip Verleger of Washington D.C.-based oil consultants Charles Rivers Associates shows oil companies do very little hedging and most of what

they undertake is on a short-term basis.

Filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission show that Enron Corp.'s capital trading unit stood out as a sophisticated user of derivatives, operating "more or less like a bank," said Mr. Verleger.

Among the oil majors, France's Elf Aquitaine, British Petroleum and Royal Dutch/Shell Group are the most active hedgers, but even they shy away from hedging on a scale that might have significantly impacted their performance.

"Most investors still prefer oil companies not to hedge, but if you can prove that you can do better over time by hedging then attitudes might change," said Catherine Arnfield, European oil analyst at J.P. Morgan Securities.

A rare example of aggressive hedging is Argentine oil producer Perez Companq, which has in the past three years sold forward up to 100 per cent of its 21 million barrels a year of oil production with impressive results. The hedge strategy has produced some \$100 million of income which Perez would not have had if it had been at the mercy of oil prices.

"The feedback we receive from our investors and analysts is that it is a very good policy and allows us to grow in different areas," said Osvaldo Hansen, a Perez Companq spokesman.

"You hear the managers of oil companies saying 'look, our investors don't want us to hedge,'" says consultant Verleger. "But the bottom line is that they don't want them to hedge when prices are going up but they do when prices are going down."

But even if oil companies' attitudes change, the market still lacks the depth to grow substantially without potential long-term oil buyers.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1995  
By Thomas S. Pierson,  
Astrologer, Carroll Righter  
Astrological Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Think about how to make your home life more ideal today and establish greater harmony there. Entertain friends this evening.

**Taurus:** (April 20 to May 20) This is a fine day for contacting old-time friends and renewing the relationships so they can continue far into the future.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Concentrate on improving your monetary status today so that you can have a greater abundance for the lean time in the future.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Get in touch with those who comprehended your needs at this time and find out much help you can expect from them at a later time.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Contact a successful advisor today and gain suggestions for your greater success. More happiness is possible with your mate this evening.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Plan how to make good friends happier today and increase the prestige you are now enjoying. Get busy at any project which is started.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Know what your finest ambitions are and get the ball rolling today in such directions. Be happy in the evening in the company of loved ones.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Although somewhat frustrated about any new activities today, you can make big progress just the same since you are ingenious and very knowledgeable.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Organise your responsibilities more wisely so that you can be more productive. Tell your mate just what you want in the near future.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) If you are very cooperative today, you can initiate and work out a partnership very well at this time. Be wide awake to some worldly affair.

**ARQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Get into project which can last for some time to come and you will have regular income coming in excess.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) Plan the amusements you most like in the days ahead. Then do some big favour for your mate and you will have greater accord and appreciation.

Birthstone of October: Opal

## U.S. tells FAO to trim spending

ROME (R) — The United Nations Monday, told the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to cut costs.

Echoing President Bill Clinton's weekend message to the 50th anniversary congress of the United Nations, U.S. Deputy Agriculture Secretary Richard Rominger said told the FAO's governing conference in Rome that Washington still backed the agency's work but wanted it to trim its spending.

But Mr. Rominger said the proposed budget needed to be brought in line with "realistic revenue projections."

He said the U.S. contribution to FAO could be "less than the current year's budget" because Congress, now debating Mr. Clinton's Democratic budget, could cut funding for international agencies.

The Republican-controlled Congress, aiming to balance the U.S. budget within seven years, has been weighing proposals that would cut foreign aid by as much as 30 per cent.

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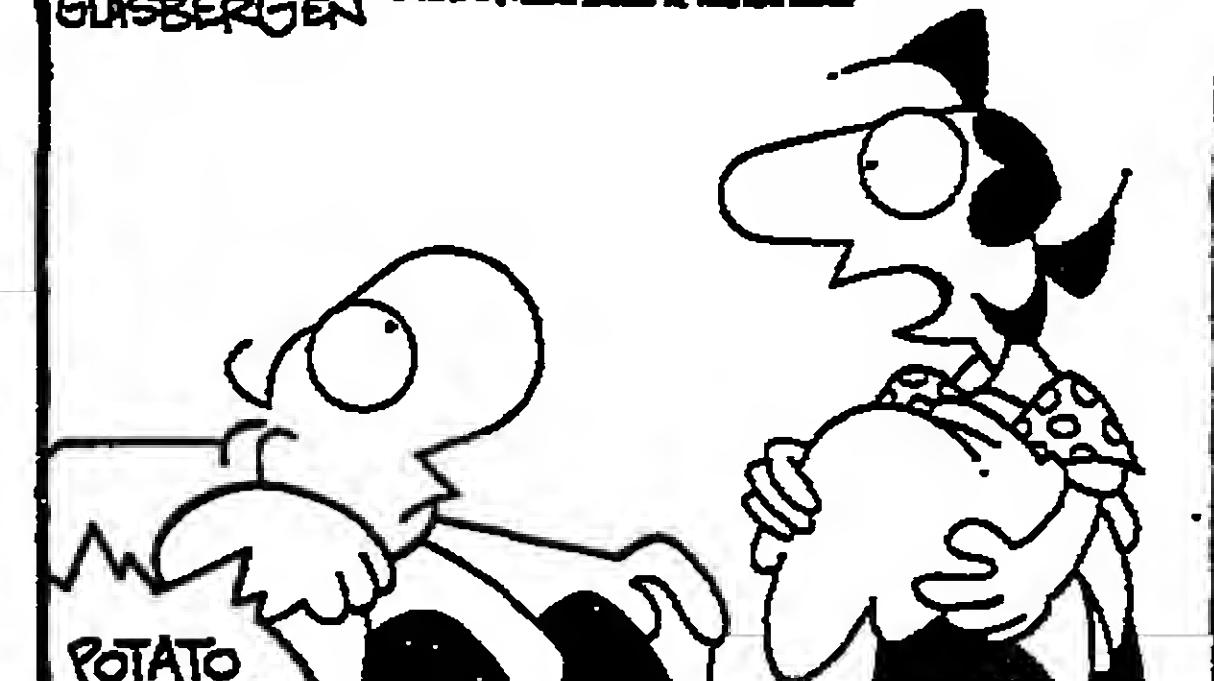
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### THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McBeath

#### ACROSS

- 1 Had destination
- 6 Lard
- 9 Verve
- 13 Pines
- 14 "When I was —"
- 16 Within pref.
- 17 Sidetrack
- 18 KY city
- 20 Fictional loser
- 22 Manly
- 23 Unrefined petroleum
- 24 Threatened
- 25 One-seeded fruit
- 27 Begat
- 28 Demir —
- 29 Librarian's device
- 31 Small groups
- 35 Distant pref.
- 37 Récols
- 39 Angry
- 40 Site of a civil rights march
- 42 Part of a map
- 44 Dog doc
- 45 Finish second
- 47 Commiserales
- 49 Get new merchandise
- 52 Moses' brother
- 53 Like the Matterhorn
- 54 Dilates
- 57 — State (Kentucky)
- 59 Coup —
- 60 Gardener's concerns
- 61 Nibble
- 62 Notched irregularity
- 63 Part of MIT: abbr.
- 64 Debussy's "La —"
- 65 Sound measurements
- DOWN
- 1 Spar
- 2 Nymph
- 3 Famous Downs
- 4 Middle, in Oxford
- 5 Flabbergast
- 10 Caper
- 11 Fur scarf
- 12 Sharpened
- 15 Louganis, e.g.
- 19 Dressed to the —
- 21 Concepts
- 24 Bugs
- 25 Play divisions
- 26 Indian
- 27 Rouen's river
- 30 Dense
- 32 KY city
- 33 Hold at bay
- 34 Gels
- 36 Least meaningful
- 38 Flower part
- 40 Middle, in Oxford
- 41 Forward
- 43 Harangues
- 45 Sour

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F	E	T	A	O	U	I	S	C	W	O	N

6 Quiz choice	7 National term	8 Duty	9 Reduces in value	10 Caper	11 Fur scarf	12 Sharpened	13 Hold at bay	14 Gels	15 Louganis, e.g.	16 Least meaningful	17 Flower part	18 Middle, in Oxford	19 Forward	20 Middle, in Oxford	21 Concepts	22 Bugs	23 Play divisions	24 Indian	25 Rouen's river	26 Dense	27 KY city	28 Hold at bay	29 Goose genus	30 City in Italy	31 Alleviate	32 Fr. holy women: abbr.	33 Hold at bay	34 Gels	35 Synagogue figure	36 Matador	37 Flower part	38 Flower part	39 Goose genus	40 Middle, in Oxford	41 Forward	42 Bugs	43 Harangues	44 Caper	45 Sour	46 Aspire	47 Goose genus	48 Matador	49 Synagogue figure	50 Actress	51 Taters	52 Goose genus	53 City in Italy	54 Alleviate	55 Fr. holy women: abbr.	56 Fr. holy women: abbr.	57 Goose genus	58 Aspire

YAY, OCTOBER 24, 1995  
Israel predicts 6.8% growth for '95

## Business & Finance

### Travel agents draw battle lines to tackle sex tourism

**CAIRO (AFP)** — Tourism ministers and travel agencies combined forces Sunday to combat the sleazy side of the tourist industry which feeds off sex and has turned more than a million children into prostitutes worldwide.

The 11th assembly of the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) ended Sunday with the adoption for the first time of a resolution to fight "sex tourism."

"We want to try to prevent tourism organised for prostitution, especially when it affects minors," said WTO Deputy Secretary-General Francesco Frangalli.

The resolution was drawn up during the six-day meeting in Cairo which was attended by 67 tourism ministers and 700 travel agencies.

Brazil and other Latin American countries were strongly in favour of the re-

solution.

"It is a problem which results from poverty and mainly developed in the 1980s. In our country 70 per cent of the population is less than 35, which increases the numbers of minors exposed to this type of exploitation," said a Brazilian delegate, asking to remain anonymous.

Germany, Britain, Sweden and Australia have already toughened up their legislation and begun legal proceedings against their nationals accused of paedophilia abroad.

Several of the major tourist companies are "also cooperating to circulate information because they want to clean up at home," Mr. Frangalli said.

The group has targeted sex-tourism for several years and drawn up a wealth of information about the phenomenon after consultations with the U.N.'s committee for human rights, Interpol and non-governmental organisations such as End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism, based in Bangkok.

The WTO wants to "have a more long-term vision and is looking to help the affected countries to develop tourism in other areas," Mr. Frangalli added.

It has already drawn up plans for an \$800,000 project in the Philippines between 1990 and 1992 and a \$1.4 million project in Sri Lanka from 1991 to 1994 with the help of the U.N. Development Programme.

In the Philippines, where the sex enthusiasts come mainly from Japan, authorities have just announced a series of strict measures and closed down several establishments.

Sweden and UNICEF are to organise a world conference in Stockholm next August on the sexual exploitation of children.

### Syria, Lebanon seek joint bank to check Arab-Israeli ties

**BEIRUT (AFP)** — Lebanese and Syrian businessmen have called for the creation of a joint bank and holding company to bolster bilateral private investments to counter growing Arab-Israeli economic ties.

The recommendation, initially called by Syria, was made Saturday, ahead of next week's Middle East economic summit in Jordan. Both Syria and Lebanon are boycotting the conference.

U.S. and Israeli officials have said the Oct. 29-31 economic summit in Amman will launch a development bank for the Middle East and North Africa to foster regional cooperation and joint development schemes.

The recommendation, who held talks in Beirut, also stressed the need to encourage private investments in Syria and Lebanon and suggested credit facilities as well.

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## Unseeded Dewulf beats Muster

VIENNA (R) — Unseeded Belgian Filip Dewulf caused a major upset in the Austrian CA tennis trophy on Sunday, triumphing over favourite Thomas Muster in a hard-fought four set match.

Cool-headed Dewulf lifted his first major victory and \$66,000 in prize money after beating world number three Muster 7-5, 6-2, 1-6, 7-5.

A furious Muster, sensing his dream of winning in Vienna for the first time slipping away, smashed his racket in half in the third game of the last set, earning himself a warning from the umpire.

The game proved to be a turning point as Muster, too often wrong-footed by his agile 23-year-old opponent, missed a simple forehand to an open court giving Dewulf the game and renewed confidence to take the match.

It was Muster's second defeat on home territory this year, losing to Spain's Alberto Costa at the Austrian open in Kitzbuehel in August.



Thomas Muster

The Austrian sports media had hoped for a final pitting Muster against Germany's Michael Stich. But Stich was forced to retire from the tournament after tearing a ligament in a quarter-final match.

Dewulf, who saw off eighth-seed Jonas Boerkman of

Sweden in the semifinals, stunned the partisan crowd at the Vienna Stadthalle Stadium who fully expected their hero Muster to sail through the match.

The Belgian drew an audible gasp from spectators when he clinched the first set by returning a fast-moving

lob from Muster with a confident cross-court smash.

Dewulf broke Muster's serve twice in the second set by deploying an array of deft shots, replying to the Austrian's powerful strokes with delicate drops which left Muster rooted to the back court.

In an attempt at a comeback, Muster took less than 20 minutes to take the third set with his trademark power serve winning two games to love. But after losing his serve game twice, Dewulf was clearly content to reserve his energy for the next and decisive set.

Despite taking the fourth set to 12 games, Muster failed to keep up the winning streak, losing his service game with two double faults to give Dewulf the match.

Dewulf who began here as number 119 in the world, travels to his next tournament in Brest in France ranked 60.

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## Whitaker wins show jumping meet

MONTERREY, Mexico (AP) — John Whitaker of Great Britain has won the \$450,000 Pulsar Grand Prix International Show Jumping Competition held in Monterrey's club Hipico la Silla.

On the last day of the four-day event, Whitaker captured the prize in the second round of the Grand Prix, riding 16-year-old Everest Grannusch.

"The course was quite difficult especially since number three," said Whitaker. "Grannusch had to go wide to make the jump. That's where the time fault came from."

Whitaker also qualified for

the \$1.5 million purse in Pulsar Crown, and he has already won a minimum prize purse of \$25,000 for his win Sunday.

And if he wins the next two in Luxembourg and Valkenswaard, the Netherlands, he will be awarded \$1.5 million prize next year.

If he wins only one of the two, his total purse will still be \$600,000.

Whitaker won the competition by achieving the lowest number of total faults over the two rounds with a clear first round and 0.25 time fault in the second for a combined total of 0.25 faults.

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Interested party may contact or leave a message on Tel No. 663362

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Newly established trading company requires:  
**an executive secretary**

- \* Applicants should be fluent in Arabic and English.
- \* Should be able to manage an office.
- \* And should have all required secretarial skills.

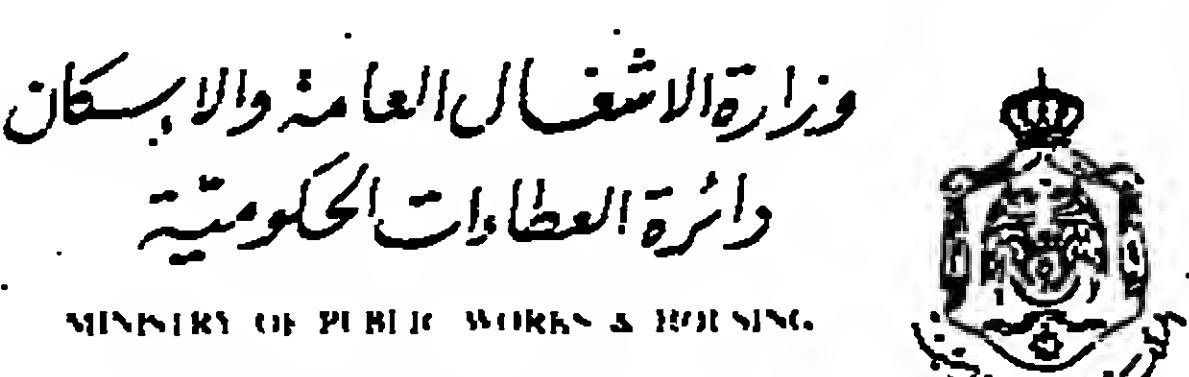
### Also required is

**an assistant secretary**  
with a good command of English,

- \* computer skills.
- \* and book-keeping

Send C.V. (including work experience) and recent photo to:

Director General  
P.O.Box 927304  
Amman 11110 Jordan



**Invitation for Bids**  
Renovation and rehabilitation of cathodic protection ground beds landside system for berths No. (3 to 10) In Aqaba Port Tender No. (195/95)

International contractors who are specialised and have long experience in the field of designing and executing renovation and rehabilitation of cathodic protection groundbeds landside system for berths, are invited to participate in the above tender. The tender documents can be collected from the Government Tenders Directorate in Amman as of Oct. 24, 1995, in accordance with the following terms:-

### 1- Scope of work

Renovation and rehabilitation of cathodic protection for landside system for berths (3 to 10) at Aqaba, general cargo which includes designing calculation, procurement, installation testing and commissioning of the new system.

2- Offers which include conditions or reservations will not be considered.

3- The latest date for the purchase of tenders documents by eligible bidders is 4/11/1995.

4- A pre-bid conference will be held at The Ports Corporation / Aqaba, at 9 o'clock a.m., on 6/11/1995 and a visit will be arranged on the same day.

5- Fee for each set of tender documents is JD 50, non-refundable.

6- Bids are to be submitted to the Government Tenders Directorate not later than 13.00 hours p.m., Amman local time on Saturday 18/11/1995.

Eng. Nasser El-Madadha  
Director General

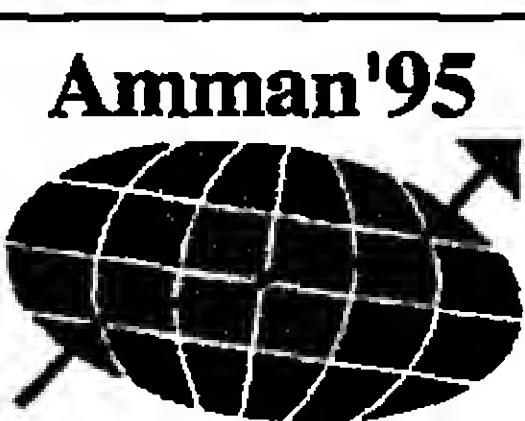
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Jean Reno,  
Natalie Portman  
& Gary Oldman...in  
Leon  
“The Professional”  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

**CINEMA**  
**PLAZA**  
Andrew McCarthy  
& Jonathan Silverman  
in  
Weekend At  
Bernies  
Part II  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

**CINEMA**  
**CONCORD**  
**CONCORD “1”**  
Adel Imam & Yusra  
Birds of the Darkness  
(Arabic)  
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:45  
**CONCORD “2”**  
Arnold Schwarzenegger...in  
Conan The Barbarian  
Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15

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“Sumaa”  
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daily at 8:30 p.m.  
Written & directed by  
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**Nabil & Hisham’s Theatre**  
TEL: 625155  
**Presents**  
**“Peace Oh Peace”**  
in English every Saturday  
Show starts at 8:30 p.m.  
For reservation call 625155



Wayne Ferreira

## Ferreira upsets Sampras in Lyon final

LYON, France (R) — Fourth seed Wayne Ferreira of South Africa played a sensational match to upset world number two Pete Sampras in the final of the \$600,000 Lyon men's tennis Grand Prix on Sunday.

Ferreira, throwing caution to the wind as he risked winners on virtually every shot, triumphed 7-6, 5-7, 6-3 in a gripping match lasting two hours 13 minutes.

The American top seed, seeking a fourth tournament

by his first serve but it was his opponent's ability to pull off surprise winners and hit the lines almost at will which caused his downfall.

An elated Ferreira said: "I played one of the best matches I could play. I was hoping I wouldn't get tight at the end. I just put on the pressure the whole match and never let him in."

Sampras, who had not lost a set all week, looked likely to sweep Ferreira aside as well when he ran up a 3-0

lead in the first set.

But the South African, tentatively till then, decided to go on the offensive, breaking Sampras before levelling at 3-3 and then going on to a tiebreak which he played impeccably to win 7-2.

Sampras looked more solid in the second set, which he won 7-5, but Ferreira again gained the upper hand when he broke to lead 3-1 in the third in a game which lasted more than 10 minutes.

## Italian soccer roundup

## Milan held to draw by upstart Vicenza

Sampdoria 2, Fiorentina 1

In Genoa, little-used mid-fielder Fausto Salsano tallied his first goal in Italy in the 54th. League-leading scorer Igor Protti hitting scored off a diving header from 12 metres in the 61st for his seventh goal and Colombian forward Miguel

Guerrero, who came on for Protti one minute earlier, made it 3-0 for Bari (2-2) in the end.

Cagliari (2-1) had gone three straight matches without a loss after starting the season 0-3.

Cremonese 1, Atlanta 1

At Udine, German striker Oliver Bierhoff scored on a penalty kick after he was pulled down in the area by defender Roberto Bacci in the 73rd minute. Bierhoff's six goals are second in the league. Udinese improved to 3-2-2, while Torino is 1-3-3.

Bari 3, Cagliari 0

At Bari, a lifeless match

**Jordan Times**  
**Tel. 699634**

## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF  
& TANIAH HANSCH  
©1994 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

### WHICH SUIT?

Both vulnerable. South deals.

**NORTH**  
K 5  
Q 7  
Q 10 8 6 3  
A 8 6 4

**WEST**  
Q 10 3 2  
Q 6 5 2  
Q X  
4 J 10 5

**EAST**  
A J 8 7  
Q Q J 10 4 3  
Q 4 2  
Q

**SOUTH**  
A A 5 4  
Q A 9  
Q J 9 5  
A 9 7 3 2

The bidding:

**SOUTH** **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**  
1 NT Pass 1 NT Pass  
1 NT Pass 3 NT Pass  
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of a

The French phrase for this type of illusion in painting is *bromp d'oeil* tricking the eye. There are many examples at the bridge table. Con

North has a classic decision between an invitational two no

trump and the raise to game. The fifth diamond is just enough to tip the scales in favor of the latter.

West leads the two of spades against three no trump. Plan the play.

The first question is whether or not to hold up on the first trick. Since West's two of spades suggests no more than four cards in the suit and you don't want a heart shift, you win the first trick. Now it's a question of which minor suit to attack.

With nine clubs headed by the ace-king in your two hands, that certainly appears to be the logical suit to attack. If clubs are 2-2, you will have nine tricks. However, the odds favor a 3-1 division, and in that case you will be down to only eight tricks and have no time to set up clubs before the defenders collect five — two spades, two diamonds, before you gather in nine — three tricks in diamonds, and two in each other suit.

Even if diamonds are 5-0, you can set up three tricks in the suit and if the spades are indeed 4-4, the defenders can take only four tricks, before you gather in nine — three tricks in diamonds, and two in each other suit.

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# Sports

## NBA superiority not threatened yet

LONDON (AP) — Fourteen wins. No losses.

That's the record of NBA teams against international clubs in the seven editions of the McDonald's Championship — and there's no evidence to suggest the streak will end anytime soon.

The Houston Rockets upheld the NBA's supremacy by easily winning the six-team event, which was billed this year as an unofficial world championship for clubs.

This was the first time the tournament featured all championship teams, including the reigning NBA champs. The outcome only confirmed that the NBA's best is still a class above the rest of the world.

"The gap is closing, but they don't have the depth to compete with American players," Rockets coach Rudy Tomjanovich said.

Case in point. The rockets played without superstar Hakeem Olajuwon, out with elbow and back injuries, but free-agent acquisition Mark Bryant stepped in and did a fine job at center.

The rockets blew out the Australian champion Perth Wildcats by a tournament record 44 points in the semifinals and cruised to a comfortable 126-112 win over Italian champion Buckler Bologna in Saturday's title game.

While the Australian and Italian teams stayed close for the first half, both games turned into routs once the Rockets picked up their fast-break offense in the third quarter.

With former dream teamer Clyde Drexler pushing the ball upcourt, soaring to the basket or dishing off to Robert Horry, the Rockets were clearly in another league.

Drexler, who had 25 points, 10 assists and seven rebounds in the final, was voted the tournament's most valuable player.

While U.S. amateur teams have suffered numerous losses in international competition in recent years, experts say it's still a long way off before the supremacy of a U.S. dream team or NBA champion will be challenged.

Significantly, the best all-around player on the international teams in London was a former NBA veteran, Orlando

Woolridge. After a 13-year career in the NBA, Woolridge is excelling in Europe at the age of 35.

Woolridge scored a tournament-record 91 points in three games for Buckler Bologna, including 34 against the Rockets. While acknowledging the superiority of the Rockets, he said Buckler could have a chance against lower-level NBA clubs.

"I know I've played on some teams in the NBA we could beat," he said.

Former NBA star Tom Chambers, who played his first games in London with Maccabi Tel Aviv, said he was surprised at the level of play abroad.

"There is not as much difference as people think," he said. "In the States, they think basketball is no good over here. But I think it's very good and a good second choice if you're not an NBA caliber player."

One player who proved he could be of NBA caliber was Buckler's Croatian guard, Arjan Komacek. He scored 85 points in three games and showed why several NBA teams have expressed interest in signing him.

"I could see him playing in the NBA," Tomjanovich said. "He really has a nose for putting the ball in the basket."

Komacek would join a line of other Croatian players who started in the McDonald's Open and went on to play in the NBA: Drazen Petrovic, Dino Radja and Toni Kukoc.

Rocket's backup guard Sam Cassell said it won't be an easy adjustment for Komacek.

"He gets a lot of calls over here," he said. "In the NBA, he would have to earn that. But if he comes over and plays, he would make someone a pretty good shooting guard or small forward."

Cassell, who had 23 points and seven assists in just 22 minutes against Buckler, made a strong case for getting more playing time. He could push Kenny Smith, who had a poor game with seven points on three-for-10 shooting from the field, for the starting point guard job.

"I want to play 40 minutes a game," Cassell said. "I'm 25. I've got fresh legs. This is the time to give me the qual-



Clyde Drexler

ty minutes."

The NBA and FIBA took the McDonald's Championship to London to help raise the profile of the sport in a country where soccer,

rugby and cricket dominate. The event drew enthusiastic crowds, including a sellout

of 10,700 for the championship game, the second biggest audience ever to watch a basketball in Britain.

However, organisers must

have been disappointed with the minimal coverage given to the event by British newspapers.

## Cruyff criticises referee after banishment to benches

LONDON (R) — Barcelona coach Johan Cruyff, banished to the stands early in his team's 1-0 home win over Valencia on Sunday, has lambasted referee Manuel Diaz Vega.

"When he doesn't whistle for the very first against a 19-year-old (Albert Celades), it's difficult to know what to say," Cruyff said.

"It's not a question of swift action but of attitude. One example: We broke through to the edge of the box 1,000 times and he didn't blow for a single free-kick on the edge of it. He gave them five at least."

"It's a good job I had my seat reserved in the stand."

It was the fourth time Cruyff has been sent packing from the bench during his reign as coach at Nou Camp.

In Italy's Serie A, the debut of Internazionale New English coach Roy Hodgson earned a cautious vote of approval following Sunday's 0-0 home draw with Lazio.

Hodgson, who took over at Inter just a week ago, made both tactical and personnel changes, recalling veteran defender Giuseppe Bergomi and midfielder Alessandro Bianchi, while moving sweeper Salvatore Fresi to midfield in a new 4-4-2 formation.

"Inter displayed unexpected concentration and team work, and ending up by looking a more determined side than their fading opponents," said the Turin daily La Stampa.

The Rome sports daily "Corriere dello Sport" commented: "The new Inter bore the stamp of the man called in to save the club, a man capable of giving the team a new, surprising and intriguing identity."

Club owner Massimo Moratti took a more positive view, saying: "I saw an aggressive, concentrated Inter today ... if you think that these results have been achieved in just four days, then I'd almost be tempted to call them prodigious."

Hodgson now faces a critical week in which Inter play a one-leg Italian Cup tie away to third division Fiorenzuolo



Johan Cruyff

on Tuesday, prior to facing city rivals and league leaders AC Milan in the traditionally competitive Milan derby next Sunday.

Milan held on to their two-point lead over joint seconds — Juventus, Parma and Napoli despite a less than impressive 1-1 away draw to surprise packet Vicenza.

Milan striker, Liberian Georges Weah will miss Wednesday's Italian Cup tie away to fourth division Forli and is doubtful for Sunday's derby after pulling a thigh muscle against Vicenza, in a game which did not please Milan coach Fabio Capello.

"We might be on top of the table, but I'm never satisfied. You cannot give away an equaliser with a header from a spot kick," Capello said.

Bayern Munich club President Franz Beckenbauer was equally scathing about his team's 1-0 win over St Pauli on Saturday, even though

to four points after the leaders could only draw 0-0 in Lille in Saturday and stepped up the psychological pressure on their rivals.

Metz captain Sylvain Kas-tendue was clearly impressed.

"They will start as favourites against us," he said. "Frankly, I saw they have got back the total mastery of the game which has made them such a force in the last three or four years."

"They have the ball almost all the time and, when they lose it, they recover it almost immediately."

Paris St Germain returned to peak form after a bleak spell at just the right time, beating Auxerre 3-1 on Sunday four days before Thursday's visit to Metz for a clash of the giants with the current league leaders.

"We have invested a lot of money and bought good players and I want to see the result of that — good football," he said.

Paris St Germain returned

to peak form after a bleak

spell at just the right time,

beating Auxerre 3-1 on Sun-

day four days before Thurs-

day's visit to Metz for a clash

of the giants with the current

league leaders.

The Parisians leapfrogged

over Auxerre into third

place, closed the gap on Metz

# VERY HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY



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## Saddam offers more food, promises political change

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, rewarding Iraqis for their overwhelming referendum victory last week, has increased their food rations and promised parliamentary elections early next year.

From December each Iraqi will get seven kilogrammes of flour a month instead of six kilogrammes and 750 grammes of vegetable oil instead of 625 grammes, an official statement in Monday's newspapers said (see page 2).

The government had cut the flour ration from nine kilogrammes a month in September 1994 because under U.N. sanctions it could not raise the foreign exchange for imports.

President Saddam ordered the increase at a joint meeting on Sunday of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council and the Baath Party, held to review the Oct. 15 referendum in which over 99 per cent of voters voted Saddam Hussein president for seven more years.

Ministers had already said they expected the parliamentary elections, the first in seven years, and the statement made this formal. It set no date but under the current law they should take place by the end of February.

The rations, which also contain rice, sugar and tea, have been highly effective, providing millions with staple items at give-away prices. The food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said last week they had prevented famine in Iraq.

But the current ration covers only 38 per cent of average calorie requirements and 43 per cent of their protein. Iraqis must buy the rest of their food on the open market, where prices can be more than a thousand times

higher. The increase compensates to some extent for inflation, which for foodstuffs was on average about 14 per cent a month between June 1993 and August 1995, according to FAO figures.

The government has been financing grain purchases by printing money, adding to hyperinflation.

A FAO report last week said the system was unsustainable and the government and the United Nations must agree on a system giving the government access to foreign currency, either by unfreezing Iraqi assets or through oil sales.

The official statement portrayed the parliamentary elections as the next step in what Iraq rulers say is a transition to constitutional rule, 27 years after the military coup which brought the Baath Party to power in 1968.

It said: "The great experiment in the field of applying authentic democracy is an additional incentive to the leadership, the party and the people to go forward in deepening and developing the democratic march."

"It has been decided early next year to elect a new National Assembly according to the National Assembly law and within the framework of the concepts of the (Baath) Party and the (1968) revolution," it added.

Political reforms announced in 1988 led to elections few months later of the present 250-member National Assembly (parliament). Its four-year mandate was extended because of the U.N. sanctions imposed since 1990.

Iraq has several political parties but all of them are allied with the ruling Baath Party in a national front.

**UAE call hailed**  
Baghdad meanwhile welcomed a call by the president of the United Arab Emirates to lift the U.N. sanctions on Iraq and urged a broad-based Arab effort to "end the crime of the embargo."

The official Iraqi News Agency, quoted Baghdad's government-run Al Chawra daily as hailing the Oct. 15 statement by the UAE leader, Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan.

The newspaper, mouthpiece of Iraq's ruling Baath Party, said: "The initiative of Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan and the Arab response to it, opens for the Arabs, including Iraq, new roles guaranteeing the reformation of their brotherly relations to build the present and the future."

Sheikh Zayed said that the crippling sanctions should be lifted to end the suffering of Iraq's people.

The 22-member Arab League, Egypt, Sudan and Qatar have voiced support for Sheikh Zayed, who also urged reconciliation in the Arab World, which was split over the Iraqi invasion.

Dubai's crown prince has also called on Arab countries to help the Iraqi people by working to lift the sanctions. Sheikh Mohammad Ben Rashid Al Maktoum was speaking in an interview with a German television station.

"I am very happy with the remarks of the president and his call for ... returning Iraq to the Arab fold," said Sheikh Mohammad, who is also UAE defence minister.

"I ask, on the basis of the president's call, all Arab countries and especially the Gulf states to help the Iraqi people by lifting the sanctions and extending immediate aid to them," he said.

"Political reforms announced in 1988 led to elections few months later of the present 250-member National Assembly (parliament). Its four-year mandate was extended because of the U.N. sanctions imposed since 1990.

Iraq has several political parties but all of them are allied with the ruling Baath Party in a national front.



DEPARTURE: An Israeli army truck leaves the military administration headquarters in Jenin, the first West Bank town due to be handed over to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) beginning Wednesday (see page one (AFP photo)

## Arafat says U.N. must continue to back Palestinians

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat told world leaders on Sunday the United Nations should continue to sponsor the cause of Palestinians until they achieve self-determination and national independence.

Addressing the start of a three-day special session marking the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, he said all developments in peace making between the Palestinians and Israel has been based on U.N. Security Council resolutions and the principle of land for peace.

The history of the United Nations was "intertwined with that of the question of Palestine" since a 1947 resolution partitioning it into two states, one Jewish and one Arab.

"They make the United Nations a witness to the immense suffering of our people and their sacrifices, their dis-

placement and scattering in all parts of the world, as well as to the wars and massacres which have been inflicted upon them."

This was Mr. Arafat's first appearance before the United Nations in New York since a 1974 address in which he said he came "bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun," adding: "Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."

Wearing his military-style uniform and keffiyeh head-dress, he said the U.N. "should continue to sponsor our Palestinian cause alongside of our inalienable national rights, including the rights of our people to return, self-determination and national independence."

This meant the U.N. "remains responsible for the cause of our people" because such important issues as the future of Jerusalem, the question of Palestinian refugees, Israeli settlements and final borders had been left to the final stage of negotiations with Israel, due to begin next May.

Palestinians embarked on

the peace process because they desired to "turn over the leaf of killing and destruction, once and for all, so that the Palestinian people and the Israeli people may live side by side in two independent states on the basis of mutual respect."

Reconciliation must be completed on all other Arab-Israeli negotiating tracks, particularly with Lebanon and Syria, he said.

"In order to be just and comprehensive, peace must also include the peoples of Iraq and Libya," he added, referring to two Arab states most strongly opposed to the current peace process.

Recalling his earlier appearance before the assembly, Mr. Arafat said: "I came to you 21 years ago as a fighter for freedom, liberation and independence, carrying with me the torments of my struggling people. Today, I come to you with a heart filled with love and peace now that the olive branch has adorned the peace of the brave... good tidings have been heralded. Help us to bring it to fruition."

## PLO sees Khartoum as venue for Hamas talks

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said Monday that Khartoum was the likely venue for planned reconciliation talks with the hardline movement Hamas next month and praised Sudan for its mediation.

"Thanks to Sudanese mediation, there is a strong chance that a meeting between Fatah and Hamas will be held in Khartoum in a month," the PLO's representative to Sudan, Omar Abu Shalashel, told AFP.

"At the moment, Khartoum is making preliminary contacts to fix a date and agenda for the meeting," between Hamas and PLO held in Cairo, the Egyptian government daily Al Ahram has said.

Mr. Shalashel said Sudan had already hosted talks between the two parties under the auspices of Hassan Tourabi, the spiritual leader of the Islamic regime which took power in Khartoum in 1989.

He said dialogue between the two sides was continuing. "We hope the Hamas leadership in the territories will convince its members abroad to participate."

After a meeting in Khartoum between Hamas's local leadership and its members abroad in early October, the self-rule authority accused the "external" leaders of blocking an accord which local members were seeking.

Mr. Shalashel, after re-

turning from three weeks in the Palestinian self-rule area of Gaza, met Saturday with President Omar Al Bashir to brief him on his talks with Mr. Arafat, who heads the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Egypt, whose relations with Sudan are tense, has also officially invited Hamas and the PNA to hold talks in Cairo. The Egyptian government daily Al Ahram has said "the two parties accepted the invitation."

Mr. Shalashel cautioned that an agreement with Hamas was still months off.

"There are encouraging signs that an accord will be reached between Fatah and Hamas before April and the Hamas leadership in the territories will take on a more pragmatic language and attitude," he said.

He said dialogue between the two sides was continuing. "We hope the Hamas leadership in the territories will convince its members abroad to participate."

After a meeting in Khartoum between Hamas's local leadership and its members abroad in early October, the self-rule authority accused the "external" leaders of blocking an accord which local members were seeking.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### IAF deputies protest joint air show

AMMAN (J.T.) — Islamic Action Front (IAF) members of Parliament Monday criticised the participation of Royal Jordanian Air Force jets and helicopters in a formation flight over Israel, Jordan and the West Bank. "An aircraft piloted by a Zionist terrorist, who has been raiding our cities, villages and camps, must not be made to fly joyously in the skies of Amman," the deputies said in a statement. "Likewise the Jordanian eagle (the emblem of RJA) ... must not fly the skies of Palestine except in a mission of jihad," the statement said. The Islamist parliamentarians called for an end to "normalisation between our Armed Forces and the enemy's as in all other aspects."

**Shiites begin hunger-strike on Bahrain**

NICOSIA (AFP) — Seven leading Shiite Muslims began a hunger-strike on Monday to try to force the Bahraini authorities to free 500 political prisoners, spokesman Abdul Wahab Hussein Ali announced. "We have started the hunger-strike," schoolteacher Hussein Ali told AFP when contacted from Nicosia. Joining Mr. Hussein Ali were five religious leaders — Sheikh Abdul Amir Al Jamri, Sheikh Ali Ahmad Al Jid Hafsi, Sayed Ibrahim Al Alawi, Sheikh Hassan Sultan and Sheikh Hussein Dayhi — as well as another teacher, Hassan Msheima. The group is demanding the release of those who were imprisoned without trial during violent street protests between December 1994 and April this year, he said. The authorities have since August released 250 people following a deal to free prisoners in return for calm, but the opposition said 500 remain behind bars. The accord was not announced officially.

**Clergy urges Iranians to pray during eclipse**

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Shiite Muslim clergy called on the nation on Monday to pray during the solar eclipse expected to be seen in the holy town of Qom in central Iran on Tuesday. The Islamic Propagation Organisation (IPO) said in a statement read on Tehran Radio that people "should pray from the beginning to the end of the eclipse." However, "it is not mandatory for people who live in regions where the eclipse is not visible to pray." Shiite Muslims perform special prayers for most natural phenomena, mainly for solar eclipses. The eclipse is expected to be seen from 5:30 a.m. (01:53 GMT) in Qom, 150 kilometres south of the capital, to 6:22 a.m. (02:52) in the town of Birjand, a 1,000 kilometres away to the east. Several teams of experts and many photographers have travelled to Birjand to watch and register the eclipse, which will be more visible in eastern Iran where the sun rises higher on the horizon. Birjand Governor Mohammad Kazemi said Monday his town was ready to welcome about 5,000 Iranian and foreign visitors who will travel there to watch the most important eclipse in the country in 50 years.

Mr. Shalashel, after re-

## Taliban planes bomb army base near Kabul

KABUL (Agencies) — Two rebel aircraft dropped at least seven bombs on an Afghan government military base just west of Kabul on Monday, the second air raid near the city in as many days, witnesses said.

Government soldiers at the Oghara military base, about 10 kilometres west of the city, showed reporters seven fresh bomb craters after the dawn strike.

They said one person was wounded in the raid, but the bombs all fell in open ground well clear of the main base and there was no sign of recent damage to buildings.

Defence Ministry spokesman Abdullah said SU-22 jets of the Taliban militia had carried out the attack, but had been driven off by anti-aircraft fire.

On Sunday, a plane dropped two bombs on a residential district beneath Kabul's strategic Television Mountain, wounding at least seven people and destroying one house, in an attack the government blamed on the Taliban.

The air strikes have added to mounting military tension between pro-government forces and Taliban fighters dug into positions in hills overlooking the southern suburbs of Kabul.

"We are not witnessing any military movements now," he said. "The Taliban are remaining in their defensive lines and are not making any movements."

Government troops fired the occasional rocket towards Taliban positions as the commander spoke to reporters.

Jalali also said Taliban had suffered heavy casualties on Saturday when government planes bombed a supply convoy heading for Charasay, a Taliban stronghold south of Kabul.

He said several dozen trucks had been carrying weapons and reinforcements to the Taliban when they emerged as a new military

## Clinton secures Arab League praise

**COLUMN**

"The world thanks you, look this way"

UNITED NATIONS (AP)

No fidgeting class of first-graders could have given a photographer a tougher job than the global leaders captured Sunday in a historic U.N. anniversary "class portrait." The final product would make their mothers proud — a sea of smiles from a world of troubles. But it was hardly a trouble-free snapshot.

The current U.S. administration's intention to veto the proposed law before Congress on this matter is positive," said Kamal, the league's deputy secretary general for Palestine, told journalists.

"The moving of the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem will remain a dream for the Jews but Arab states will strongly oppose any attempt to impose a fait accompli in Jerusalem," Mr. Kamal said.

Congress was to debate later Monday a bill calling for the embassy to be moved to Jerusalem by 1999, sponsored mainly by Senate majority leader and presidential candidate Bob Dole.

Mr. Kamal said the timing of the debate "was part of the American presidential election campaign" aiming "to bring in Jewish votes and support."

U.S. President Bill Clinton has announced he would veto the bill, warning it would be a blow to the Middle East peace process.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (FLO) are due to start negotiations covering Jerusalem by May 1996. The Palestinians want the eastern sector as the capital of a state of their own, at the end of five years of autonomy launched in May 1994.

Israel seized and annexed "the Arab eastern sector of Jerusalem in 1967, proclaiming the whole city as its 'capital'." But it has failed to secure international recognition.

Some 70,000 Israelis signed a petition handed to U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk on Monday backing plans to transfer his embassy to Jerusalem.

A former Israeli ambassador to Washington linked to the right-wing opposition Likud, Zalman Shoval, was behind the initiative timed for the start of the congressional debate on the proposed transfer.

**Invitations to U.S. reception 'eaten by dog'**

NEW YORK (R) — Seven nations bartered from a glittering reception for world leaders hosted by President Bill Clinton to mark the United Nations' 50th anniversary were told their invitations had been eaten by a dog. The list of undesirable featured Iran, Iraq, Cuba, Sudan, North Korea, Libya and Somalia.

"That's it ... Now, everyone remove their name tag and put it in your pocket." Amid laughter, as sari-clad women and African robe-clad men searched for a pocket, Skipworth announced, "That's it ... The world thanks you. Look this way suddenly, a big 'smiley-face' banner was unfurled beneath the large-format camera, the ice was broken, and Skipworth had his once-in-a-lifetime shot: America and Iran, India and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Russia, Arabs, all smiles, all at once.

**Mistaken quote offends Iranians**

UNITED NATIONS (R) — An error by a White House reporter angered Iranian diplomats at the United Nations, and obliged U.S. National Security Adviser Anthony Lake to try to correct the mistake.

The error occurred when the reporter quoted an unidentified U.S. official as saying that only "dog-nations" were excluded from a presidential reception. The official said the excluded nations included Iran, Iraq, Cuba, Sudan, Libya, North Korea and Somalia. "No. A flippant administration official on background did say that the dog — this was with regard to the invitations — that the dog ate the invitations," Mr. Lake said.